MEDITATIONS AND DISCOURSES Concerning the Glory of Christ,

APPLYED UNTO

Unconverted SINNERS,

AND

SAINTS

UNDER

SPIRITUAL DECAYES:

In Two CHAPTERS,

FROM

JOHN XVII. xxiv.

By the late Reverend *JOHN OWEN*, D.D.

LONDON,

Printed by *J. A.* for *William* [illegible]

the *Bible* in *Newgate-street*, 1691.

TO THE READER.

THE Design of this Preface is not to commend either the Author or the Matter contained in this little Book. Let every Reader do as he finds cause. Nor need any Assurance be given that Doctor Owen was the Author, to any who have conversed with his Writings, and will be at the Pains to read this over. It is indeed his Application of the former Discourses upon this Subject, printed in the Year 1684. But the Reason why it was not then added (the Omission whereof rendred that Book imperfect to judicious Readers) seems necessary to be given. Had it pleased God he had lived a little longer, it would have come out as perfect as his other Works. But the[illegible] no

tranſcribed in his Life-time than what was then printed, and that publiſhed ſoon after his Death; Theſe Two Chapters wrote only with his own hand, were found too late to be then added. They are therefore now printed to compleat *thoſe Diſcourſes. And it is preſumed, that as no ſerious Chriſtian who reads this, will be ſatisfied without the other alſo: So all who prize the former, will be glad of the Opportunity to add this thereunto.*

John XVII. 24.

Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.

THE High Priest under the Law when he was to enter into the Holy Place on the Solemn day of Atonement, was to take *both his hands full of sweet Incense* from the *Golden Table of Incense*, to carry along with him in his entrance. He had also a *Censer* filled with *Fire*, that was taken from the Altar of *Burnt-offerings*, where Atonement was made for Sin with Blood. Upon his actual entrance through the vail, he put the *Incense on the Fire in the Censer*, until the *Cloud of it's smoak* covered the *Ark*, and the *Mercy Seat*. See *Levit.* 16. 12, 13. And the end hereof was to present unto God, in the behalf of the People, a sweet smelling Savour from the Sacrifice of Propitiation. See the Declaration of these things in our Exposition of *Heb.* 9*th*.

IN Answer unto this *Mystical Type*, the great *High-priest* of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ, being to enter into the *Holy Place not made with hands*, did by the glorious Prayer Recorded in this Chapter, influenced from the *Blood of his Sacrifice*, fill the Heavens above, the glorious Place of God's Residence

Incense, or the *sweet perfume* of his Blessed Intercession, typed by the *incense* offered by the High-priest of old. By the same *Eternal Fire* wherewith he offered himself a *bloody Sacrifice* to make Atonement for Sin, he kindled in his most Holy Soul those desires for the *Application* of all its Benefits unto his *Church*, which are here expressed, and wherein his Intercession doth consist.

IT is only one passage in the Verse above named, that at present I design an enquiry into. And this is the *subject matter* of what the Lord Christ here desires in the behalf of those *given him by the Father*; namely, That they may *behold his glory*.

IT is evident, That in this Prayer the Lord Christ hath respect unto his *own Glory*, and the *manifestation* of it, which he had in the entrance asked of the Father, *ver.* 4, 5. But in this place he hath not so much respect unto it as *his own*, as unto the Advantage, Benefit, Satisfaction and Blessedness of his Disciples, in the *beholding* of it. For these things were the end of all that *Mediatory Glory* which was given unto him. So *Joseph* charged his *Brethren*, when he had revealed himself unto them, that they should *tell his Father of all his Glory in Egypt*, Gen. 45. 13. This he did, not for an *Ostentation* of his own Glory, but for the *Satisfaction* which he knew his Father would take in the Knowledge of it. And such a *manifestation of his Glory* unto his Disciples doth the Lord Christ here desire, as might fill them with Blessed Satisfaction for evermore.

THIS alone which is here prayed for, will give them such satisfaction, and nothing else. The Hearts of Believers are like the *Needle* touched by the *Load-stone*, which cannot rest until it comes to the Point whereunto by the secret Vertue of it, it is directed. For being once touched by the Love of Christ, receiving therein an impression of secret ineffable Vertue, they will ever be in moti-

on, and restless, until they come unto him, and *behold his Glory.* That Soul which can be satisfied *without it*, that cannot be eternally satisfied *with it*, is not partaker of the efficacy of his Intercession.

I shall lay the Foundation of the ensuing Meditations in this one Assertion, namely, *That one of the greatest Priviledges and Advancements of Believers, both in this World, and unto Eternity, consists in their* BEHOLDING THE GLORY OF CHRIST. This, therefore he desires for them in this Solemn Intercession, as the complement of all his other requests in their behalf; That they may *behold my Glory.* Ἵνα θεωρῶσι; that they may *see, view, behold* or contemplate on *my Glory.* The Reasons why I assign not this glorious Priviledge only unto the *Heavenly state*, which is principally respected in this place, but apply it unto the state of Believers in this World also, with their Duties and Priviledges therein, shall be immediately declared.

ALL Unbelievers do in their Heart call Christ *Ichabod*; *Where is the Glory?* They see neither *form nor comeliness in him*, that he should be desired. They look on him as *Michael Saul's* Daughter did on *David dancing before the Ark*, when she despised him in her Heart. They do not indeed (many of them) *call Jesus Anathema*, but cry, *Hail Master*, and then Crucifie him.

HENCE have we so many Cursed Opinions advanced in derogation unto his Glory, some of them really destructive of all that is truly so; yea denying the *only Lord that bought us*, and substituting a false Christ in his room. And others there are who express their slight thoughts of him and his glory, by bold irreverent enquiries, *of what use his person is in our Religion*; as though there were any thing in our Religion, that hath either Reality, Substance, or Truth, but by vertue of its Relation thereunto. And by their *Answers*, they bring their own *Enquiries* yet nearer unto the borders of Blasphemy.

NEVER was there an Age ſince the name of Chriſtians was known upon the Earth, wherein there was ſuch a direct Oppoſition made unto the *Perſon and Glory of Chriſt*, as there is in that wherein we live. There were indeed in the firſt Times of the Church, ſwarms of proud, doting, brainſick perſons, who vented many fooliſh imaginations about him, which iſſued at length in *Arianiſm*, in whoſe Ruines they were buried. The *Gates of Hell* in them, prevailed not againſt the Rock on which the Church is built. But as it was ſaid of *Cæſar*, *Solus acceſſit ſobrius, ad perdendam Rempublicam*; *He alone went ſoberly about the Deſtruction of the Commonwealth*; So we now have great Numbers who oppoſe the Perſon and Glory of Chriſt, under a pretence of *Sobriety of Reaſon*, as they vainly plead. Yea, the disbelief of the Myſteries of the *Trinity, and the Incarnation of the Son of God*, the ſole Foundation of Chriſtian Religion, is ſo diffuſed in the World, as that it hath almoſt devoured the power and vitals of it. And not a few, who dare not yet expreſs their minds, do give broad intimations of their intentions and good will towards him, in making them the Object of their ſcorn and reproach, who deſire to know nothing but him, and him Crucified.

GOD in his appointed time will effectually Vindicate his *Honour* and *Glory*, from the vain attempts of Men of corrupt minds againſt them.

IN the mean time, it is the Duty of all thoſe who *love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity*, to give Teſtimony in a peculiar manner unto this Divine Perſon and Glory, according unto their ſeveral Capacities, becauſe of the Oppoſition that is made againſt them.

I HAVE thought my ſelf on many accounts obliged to caſt my Mite into this Treaſury. And I have choſen ſo to do, not in a way of *controverſie* (which formerly I have engaged in) but ſo, as together with the vindica-

tion of the Truth, to promote the ſtrengthning of the Faith of true Believers, their Edification in the Knowledge of it; and to expreſs the Experience which they have, or may have of the Power and Reality of theſe things.

THAT which at preſent I deſign to Demonſtrate is, That the *Beholding of the Glory of Chriſt, is one of the greateſt Priviledges and Advancements that Believers are capable of in this World, or that which is to come.* It is that whereby they are firſt gradually *conformed* unto it, and then fixed in the Eternal *enjoyment* of it. For here in this life, *beholding his Glory, they are changed or transformed into the likeneſs of it*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. and hereafter, they ſhall be *for ever like unto him*, becauſe they *ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2. Hereon do our preſent Comforts, and future Bleſſedneſs depend. This is the Life and Reward of our Souls. He that *hath ſeen him hath ſeen the Father alſo*; *Joh.* 14. 9. For we diſcern the *Light of the Knowledge of God, only in the Face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6.

THERE are therefore, two ways or degrees *of beholding the Glory of Chriſt*, which are conſtantly diſtinguiſhed in the Scripture. The one is by *Faith* in this World, which is the Evidence of things not ſeen. The other is by *Sight*, or immediate viſion in Eternity, 2 *Cor.* 5. 7. *We walk by faith and not by ſight.* We do ſo whilſt we are in this World, *whilſt we are preſent in the Body, and abſent from the Lord*, ver. 8. But we ſhall live and walk by *Sight* hereafter. And it is the Lord Chriſt and his Glory, which are immediate objects both of this *Faith* and *Sight*. For we here *behold him darkly in a Glaſs* (that is by Faith) *but we ſhall ſee him face to face*; (by immediate viſion.) *Now we know him in part: but then we ſhall know him as we are known*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. What is the difference between theſe two ways of *beholding the Glory of Chriſt*, ſhall be afterwards declared.

IT is the first way, namely by *Vision* in the Light of Glory, that is principally included in that prayer of our Blessed Saviour, that his Disciples may be *where he is, to behold his Glory*. But, I shall not confine my enquiry thereunto; nor doth our Lord Jesus exclude from his desire, that Sight of his Glory which we have *by faith* in this World; but prays for the Perfection of it in Heaven. It is therefore the *first way*, that in the first place I shall insist upon, and that for the Reasons ensuing.

1. NO Man shall ever behold the Glory of Christ by *Sight* hereafter, who doth not in some measure behold it by *Faith* here in this World. *Grace* is a necessary preparation for *Glory*, and *Faith* for *Sight*. Where the Subject, the Soul, is not previously seasoned with *Grace* and *Faith*, it is not capable of *Glory*, or *Vision*. Nay, persons not disposed hereby unto it, cannot desire it, whatever they pretend; they only deceive their own Souls, in supposing that so they do. Most Men will say with confidence, living and dying, *that they desire to be with Christ, and to behold his Glory*; But they can give no Reason, why they should desire any such thing; only they think it somewhat that is better than to be in that evil condition which otherwise they must be cast into for ever, when they can be here no more. If a Man pretend himself to be enamoured on, or greatly to desire what he never *saw*, nor was ever represented unto him, he doth but dote on his own Imaginations. And the pretended desires of many, to *behold the Glory of Christ* in Heaven, who have no view of it by Faith whilst they are here in this World, are nothing but self-deceiving imaginations.

SO do the *Papists* delude themselves. Their Carnal Affections are excited by their outward Senses, to delight in *Images* of Christ, in his Sufferings, his Resurrection, and Glory above. Hereon they satisfie themselves, that they *behold the Glory of Christ* himself, and that with

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Love and great Delight. But whereas there is not the leaſt true Repreſentation made of the Lord Chriſt, or his Glory, in theſe things, that being confined abſolutely unto the Goſpel alone, and this way of attempting it being laid under a ſevere interdict, they do but ſport themſelves with their own deceivings.

THE Apoſtle tells us concerning himſelf, and other Believers, when the Lord Chriſt was preſent, and converſed with them in the Days of his Fleſh, that they *ſaw his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.* *Joh.* 1. 14. And we may enquire, what was this Glory of Chriſt, which they ſo ſaw, and by what means they obtained a proſpect of it? For (1.) It was not the Glory of his *outward condition*, as we behold the Glory and Grandeur of the Kings and Potentates of the Earth; For he made *himſelf of no Reputation*, but being in the Form of a Servant, he walked in the Condition of a Man of low Degree. The Secular Grandeur of his *pretended Vicar*, makes no Repreſentation of that Glory of his, which his Diſciples ſaw. He kept no Court, nor Houſe of Entertainment, nor (though he made all things) had of his own where to lay his Head. Nor 2. Was it with reſpect to the outward Form of the *Fleſh which he was made*, wherein he took our Nature on him, as we ſee the Glory of a comely or beautiful Perſon; For he had therein neither *form nor comelineſs*, that he ſhould be deſired, *his viſage was ſo marred more than any Man, and his form more than the ſons of men*, Iſa. 52. 14. *Chap.* 53. 2, 3. All things appeared in him as became *a Man of Sorrows.* Nor 3. Was it abſolutely the *Eternal Eſſential Glory of his Divine Nature*, that is intended. For this no Man can ſee in this World. What we ſhall attain in a view thereof hereafter, we know not. But 4. It was his Glory, as he was *full of Grace and Truth.* They ſaw the Glory of his Perſon and his

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Office in the Administration of *Grace and Truth*. And how, or by what means did they see this Glory of Christ? It was by *Faith*, and no otherwise. For this Priviledge was granted unto them only who *received him, and believed on his name*, ver. 12. This was that Glory which the *Baptist* saw, when upon his coming unto him he said unto all that were present, *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sin of the World*, *Joh.* 1. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

WHEREFORE let no Man deceive himself: He that hath no *Sight* of the Glory of Christ here, shall never have any of it hereafter unto his Advantage. It is not therefore unto Edification, to discourse of Beholding the Glory of Christ in Heaven by *vision*, until we go through a tryal, whether we see any thing of it in this World by *Faith* or no.

2*ly*. THE *beholding of Christ in Glory*, is that which in it self is too High, Illustrious, and Marvellous for us in our present condition. It hath a splendor and glory too great for our present Spiritual *visible faculty*; as the direct, immediate sight of the Sun darkens our sight, and doth not relieve or strengthen it at all. Wherefore we have no way to take into our minds any true Spiritual Apprehensions of the Nature of *Immediate Vision*, or what it is to see the Glory of Christ in Heaven, but by that *View* which we have by *Faith* in this life of the same Glory. Whatever otherwise falls into our Minds, is but conjecture and imagination; Such as are the Contemplations of most about Heavenly things.

I have seen and read somewhat of the Writings of of Learned Men, concerning the *State of future glory*; some of them are filled with *excellent Notions of Truth*, and *Elegancy of Speech*, whereby they cannot but much affect the minds of them who duely consider what they say. But I know not well whence it comes to pass, many complain, that in reading of such discourses they are like a

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Man who *beheld his natural face in a Glass, and immediately forgets what manner of Man he was*; as one of old complained to the same purpose upon his perusal of *Plato*'s contemplations about the Immortality of the Soul. The things spoken do not abide, nor Incorporate with our minds. They *please* and *refresh* for a little while, like a showre of Rain in a dry Season, that soaketh not unto the Roots of things; the power of them doth not enter into us. Is it not all from hence, that their *notions of future things* are not enduced out of the *Experience* which we have of the Beginnings of them in this World; without which, they can make no permanent aboad in our minds, nor continue any Influence upon our Affections? yea, the Soul is disturbed, not edified, in all *Contemplations of future Glory*, when things are proposed unto it, whereof in this life it hath neither foretaste, sense, experience, nor evidence. No man ought to look for any thing in Heaven, but what one way or other he hath some *experience* of in this Life. If Men were fully perswaded hereof, they would be, it may be, more in the exercise of Faith and Love about Heavenly things, than for the most part they are. At present they know not what they enjoy, and they look for they know not what.

HENCE is it, that Men utterly strangers unto all Experience of the Beginning of Glory in themselves as an effect of Faith, have filled their Divine Worship with *Images*, *Pictures*, and *Musick*, to represent unto themselves somewhat of that Glory which they fancy to be above. For into that which is truly so, they have no prospect, nor can have; because they have no experience of its power in themselves; nor do they taste of its Goodness by any of its First-fruits in their own minds. Wherefore by that view alone, and not otherwise, which we have of the *Glory of Christ by Faith* here in this World, we may attain such blessed conceptions of our beholding *his*

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glory above by *immediate vision*, as shall draw out our Hearts unto the Admiration of it, and desires of its full enjoyment.

3. HEREIN then our present *edification* is principally concerned. For in this present *beholding of the Glory of Christ*, the Life and Power of Faith are most eminently acted. And from this Exercise of *Faith*, doth *Love* unto Christ principally, if not solely arise and spring. If therefore we desire to have *Faith in its vigor*, or *Love in its Power*, giving Rest, Complacency, and Satisfaction unto our own Souls, we are to seek for them in the diligent discharge of this Duty; elsewhere they will not be found. Herein would I live; Herein would I Dye; Hereon would I dwell in my Thoughts and Affections, to the withering and consumption of all the painted Beauties of this World, unto the Crucifying all things here below, until they become unto me a dead and deformed thing, no way meet for affectionate Embraces.

FOR these, and the like Reasons, I shall first enquire into our Beholding of the *Glory of Christ in this world by Faith*; And therein endeavour to lead the Souls of them that Believe, into the more retired walks of Faith, Love, and Holy Meditation, *whereby the King is held in his Galleries*. Cant. 7. 5.

BUT because there is no Benefit in, nor advantage by the Contemplation of this Sacred Truth, but what consists in an improvement of the practice of the duty declared in it, namely, the *constant beholding of the Glory of Christ by Faith*: I shall for the promotion of it, premise some few Advantages which we may have thereby.

1. WE shall hereby be made *fit and meet for Heaven*. Every man is not so, who desires it, and hopes for it. For some are not only unworthy of it, and excluded from it by reason of Sin; but they are *unmeet* for it, and incapable of any advantage by it. All men indeed think themselves

themſelves *fit enough for Glory* (what ſhould hinder them?) if they could attain it. But it is becauſe they know not what it is. Men ſhall not be *clothed with Glory*, as it were, whether they will or no. It is to be received in that Exerciſe of the Faculties of their Souls, which ſuch Perſons have no Ability for. Muſick hath no Pleaſure in it, unto them that cannot hear; nor the moſt beautiful Colours unto them that cannot ſee. It would be no Benefit unto a Fiſh to take him from the bottom of the Ocean, filled with Cold and Darkneſs, and to place him under the Beams of the Sun. For he is no way meet to receive any Refreſhment thereby. Heaven it ſelf would not be more advantagious unto Perſons not renewed by the Spirit of Grace in this Life.

HENCE the Apoſtle gives thanks *unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, *Col.* 1. 12. Indeed the Beginning here, and the Fulneſs of Glory hereafter, are communicated unto Believers by an Almighty Act of the Will and Grace of God. But yet he hath ordained Ways and Means whereby they may be made *meet receptive Subjects* of the Glory ſo to be communicated unto them. That this Way and Means is by the *beholding of the Glory of Chriſt by Faith*, ſhall be fully declared in our Progreſs. This therefore ſhould excite us unto this Duty; for all our *preſent* Glory conſiſts in our Preparation for *future* Glory.

2. NO Man can by Faith take a real View of this Glory, but *Vertue will proceed from it* in a transforming Power, to *change him into the ſame Image*. 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. How this is done, and how we become like unto Chriſt, by beholding his Glory, ſhall be fully declared in our Progreſs.

3. THE conſtant Contemplation of the Glory of Chriſt, will give Reſt, Satisfaction, and Complacency unto the Souls of them who are exerciſed therein. Our

Minds are apt to be filled with a Multitude of perplexed Thoughts, Fears, Cares, Dangers, Distresses, Passions, and Lusts, do make various Impressions on the Minds of Men, filling them with Disorder, Darkness, and Confusion. But where the Soul is fixed in its Thoughts and Contemplations on this glorious Object, it will be brought into, and kept in an Holy, Serene, Spiritual Frame. For to be *Spiritually minded, is Life and Peace.* And this it doth, by taking off our Hearts, from all undue Regard unto all things below, in comparison of the great Worth, Beauty, and Glory of what we are conversant withal. See *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. A Defect herein makes many of us Strangers unto an Heavenly Life; and to live beneath the Spiritual Refreshments and Satisfactions that the Gospel doth tender unto us.

4. THE Sight of the Glory of Christ, is the Spring and Cause of our Everlasting Blessedness. We *shall be ever with the Lord,* 1 *Thes.* 4. 17. Or, *be with Christ, which is best of all. Phil.* 1. 23. For there shall we *behold his Glory, Joh.* 17. 24. and by *seeing him as he is, we shall be made like him,* 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. which is our Everlasting Blessedness.

THE Enjoyment of God by *Sight,* is commonly called the *Beatifical Vision*; and it is the sole Fountain of all the Actings of our Souls in the State of Blessedness, which the old *Philosophers* knew nothing of; neither do we know distinctly what they are, or what is this Sight of God. Howbeit, this we know, that God in his *Immense Essence* is *invisible* unto our Corporeal Eyes, and will be so to Eternity; as also *incomprehensible* unto our Minds. For nothing can perfectly comprehend that which is Infinite, but what is it self Infinite. Wherefore the Blessed and *Blessing Sight* which we shall have of God, will be always *in the Face of Jesus Christ.* Therein will that Manifestation of the Glory of God in his Infinite Perfecti-

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ons, and all their blessed Operations, so shine into our Souls, as shall immediately fill us with Peace, Rest, and Glory.

THESE things we here admire, but cannot comprehend. We know not well what we say, when we speak of them: yet is there in True Belivers a Fore-sight, and Fore-taste of this Glorious Condition. There enters sometimes by the Word and Spirit into their hearts such a sense of the *uncreated Glory* of God, shining forth in Christ, as Affects and Satiates their Souls with ineffable Joy. Hence ariseth that *Peace of God* which is *above all Understanding*, keeping our Hearts and Minds through Jesus Christ. *Phil.* 4. 7. *Christ in Believers the Hope of Glory*, gives them to taste of the First-fruits of it; yea, sometimes to bath their Souls in the *Fountain of Life*, and to *drink of the Rivers of Pleasure* that are at his Right hand. Where any are utterly unacquainted with these things, they are Carnal, yea, Blind, *and seeing nothing afar off*. These Enjoyments indeed are rare, and for the most part of short Continuance. *Rara hora, brevis mora.* But it is from our own Sloth and Darkness that we do not enjoy more *Visits* of this Grace; and that the Dawnings of Glory do not more shine on our Souls. Such things as these may excite us to Diligence in the Duty proposed unto us.

AND I shall enquire. 1. *What* is that *Glory of Christ*, which we do, or may *behold* by Faith? 2. *How* do we *behold* it? 3. *Wherein* our doing so differs from immediate Vision in Heaven. And in the whole we shall endeavour an Answer unto the Enquiry made unto the Spouse, by the Daughters of *Jerusalem*. *Cant.* 5. 9. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, thou fairest among Women? What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, that thou dost so charge us?*

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Glory of the Person of Christ, as the only Representative of God unto the Church.

THE *Glory of Christ*, is the Glory of the Person of Christ. So he calls it τὴν δόξαν τὴν ἐμὴν, *Joh.* 17. 28. *That Glory which is mine*, belongeth to me, unto my Person.

THE Person of Christ may be considered two ways. 1. *Absolutely* in it self. 2. In the *Susception* and Discharge of his Office, with what ensued thereon. His Glory on these distinct Accounts, is distinct and different; but all equally *his own*. How in both respects we may *behold* it by Faith, is that which we enquire into.

THE first thing wherein we may behold the Glory of the *Person of Christ*, God and Man, which was given him of his Father, consists in the *Representation* of the Nature of God, and of the Divine Person of the *Father*, unto the Church in him; *For we behold the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. Otherwise we know it not, we see it not, we see nothing of it: that is the way of *seeing* and *knowing* God, declared in the Scripture, as our Duty and Blessedness. The Glory of God comprehends both the Holy Properties of his Nature, and the Counsels of his Will; and the *Light of the Knowledge of these things*, we have only in the *Face* or Person of Jesus Christ. Whatever obscure imperfect Notions we may have of them otherways, we cannot have φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ Θεοῦ the Light of the Illuminating, iradiating Knowledge of the

Glory

Glory of God, which may enlighten our Minds, and ſanctifie our Hearts, but only ἐν προσώπῳ *in the Face* or Perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*; for he is the *Image of God*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. The Brightneſs of the Fathers Glory, and the *expreſs Image of his Perſon*, *Heb.* 1. 2. The *Image of the inviſible God*, *Col.* 1. 16. I do here only mention theſe things, becauſe I have handled them at large in my Diſcourſe of the *Miſtery* of *Godlineſs*, or the *Perſon* of *Chriſt*; whereunto I refer the Readers for their full Declaration and Vindication. Herein is he glorious, in that he is the great *Repreſentative* of the Nature of God, and his Will unto us, which without him would have been eternally hid from us, or been inviſible unto us; we ſhould never have *ſeen* God at any time, here nor hereafter, *Joh.* 1. 18.

IN his Divine Perſon abſolutely conſidered, he is the Eſſential Image of God, even the Father: *He is in the Father*, and the Father in him, in the Unity of the ſame Divine Eſſence, *Joh.* 14. 10. Now he is *with the Father*, *John* 1. 1. In the Diſtinction of his Perſon, ſo is he his Eſſential Image, *Col.* 1. 15. *Heb.* 1. 2. In his Incarnation he becomes the Repreſentative Image of God unto the Church, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. without whom our Underſtandings can make no ſuch Approach unto the Divine Excellencies, but that God continues to be *unto us*, what he is in *himſelf*, *the Inviſible God*. In the Face of Jeſus Chriſt, we ſee his Glory.

THIS is the *Original Glory of Chriſt given him by his Father*, and which by Faith we may behold: He, and he alone declares, repreſents and makes known unto Angels and Men, the *Eſſential Glory* of the Inviſible God, his Attributes and his Will, without which, a perpetual comparative Darkneſs would have been on the whole Creation, eſpecially that part of it here below.

THIS is the Foundation of our Religion, the *Rock whereon the Church is built*, the Ground of all our Hopes of

Salvation, of Life and Immortality: All is resolved into this; namely, the *Representation* that is made of the Nature and Will of God, in the Person and Office of Christ: If this fail us, we are lost for ever; if this Rock stand firm, the Church is safe here, and shall be triumphant hereafter.

HEREIN then is the Lord Christ exceedingly glorious. Those who cannot *behold this Glory of his by Faith*, namely, as he is the great Divine Ordinance to *represent God* unto us, they know him not. In their Worship of him, they worship but an Image of their own devising.

YEA, in the Ignorance and Neglect hereof consists the *formal Nature of Unbelief*, even that which is inevitably ruinous unto the Souls of Men. He that discerns not the *Representation of the Glory of God* in the Person of Christ unto the Souls of Men, is an Unbeliever. Such was the State of the unbelieving *Jews* and *Gentiles* of old; They did not, they would not, they could not behold the Glory of God in him, nor how he did represent him. That this was both the Cause, and the *Formal Nature* of their Unbelief, the Apostle declares at large, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. Not to see the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God, and consequently all the other holy Properties of his Nature in Christ, is to be an Unbeliever.

THE Essence of Faith consists in a due Ascription of Glory to God, *Rom.* 4. 20. This we cannot attain unto without the Manifestation of those *Divine Excellencies* unto us, wherein he is Glorious. This is done in Christ alone, so as that we may glorifie God in a saving and acceptable Manner. He who discerns not the Glory of Divine Wisdom, Power, Goodness, Love and Grace, in the Person and Office of Christ, with the way of the Salvation of Sinners by him, is an Unbeliever.

HENCE

HENCE the great Design of the Devil in the beginning of the Preaching of the Gospel, was to *blind the Eyes of Men*, and fill their Minds with Prejudices, that they *might not behold* this Glory of his; So the Apostle gives an Account of his Success in this Design, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4. *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid unto them that are lost, in whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them that believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.* By various Ways and Methods of Deceit, to secure the Reputation he had got, of being *God of this World*, by Pretences and Appearances of supernatural Power and Wisdom, he laboured to blind the Eyes of Men with Prejudices against that *glorious Light of the Gospel*, which proposed the Lord Christ as the only *Image of God*. This Blindness, this Darkness is cured in them that believe, by the mighty Power of God; For *God who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath irradiated our Hearts with the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*, v. 6. wherein true, saving Faith doth consist. Under this *Darkness* perished the unbelieving World of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and such is the present Condition of all by whom the Divine Person of Christ is denied; for no mere Creature can ever make a perfect Representation of God unto us. But we must a little further enquire into this Mystery.

SINCE Men fell from God by sin, it is no small part of their Misery and Punishment, that they are covered with *thick Darkness and Ignorance* of the Nature of God. They know him not, they have not seen him at any time. Hence is that Promise to the Church in Christ, *Isa.* 60. 1, 2. *For behold the Darkness shall cover the Earth, and gross Darkness the People: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his Glory shall be seen upon thee.*

THE Antient Philosophers made great Enquiries into, and obtained many Notions of the Divine *Being*, its Ex-

istence and Excellencies. And these Notions they adorned with great Elegancy of Speech, to allure others unto the Admiration of them. Hereon they boasted themselves to be the only *Wise Men* in the World, *Rom.* 1. 22. φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοί they *boasted* that they were the Wise: But we must abide in the Judgment of the Apostles, concerning them in their Enquiries: He assures us, that the *World in its Wisdom*, that is, these wise Men in it by their Wisdom *knew not God*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. And he calls the Authors of their best Notions *Atheists*, or *Men without God in the World*, Ephes. 2. 12. For,

1. THEY had no certain Guide, Rule, nor Light, which being attended unto, might lead them infallibly into the Knowledge of the Divine Nature: All they had of this Kind, was their own λογισμοὶ their *Reasonings* or Imaginations, whereby they commenced συζητητὰς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου *the great Disputers of the World*; but in them they *waxed vain, and their foolish Heart was darkned*, *Rom.* 1. 21. They did at best but endeavour ψηλαφᾶν, *to feel after God*, as Men do in the Dark, after what they cannot clearly discern, *Acts* 17. 27. Among others, *Cicero*'s Book *De Naturâ Deorum*, gives us an exact Account of the Intention of the Apostle in that Expression. And it is at this Day not Want of Wit, but Hatred of the Mysteries of our Religion, which makes so many prone to forgo all *Supernatural Revelation*, and to betake themselves unto a Religion declared, as they suppose, by Reason, and the Light of Nature; like Bats and Owls, who being not able to bear the Light of the Sun, betake themselves unto the Twi-light, to the Dawnings of Light and Darkness.

2. WHATEVER they did attain, as unto *rational Notions* about things invisible and incomprehensible, yet could they never deliver themselves from such Principles and Practises in Idolatry and all manner of flagitious Sins,

as

as that they could be of any Benefit unto them. This is ſo effectually demonſtrated by the Apoſtle in the *Firſt Chapter of the Epiſtle to the Romans*, as that we need not to inſiſt upon it.

MEN may talk what they pleaſe of a *Light within them*, or of the Power of Reaſon, to conduct them unto that Knowledge of God, whereby they may live unto him: But if they had nothing elſe, if they did not boaſt *themſelves* of that Light, which hath its Foundation and Original in Divine Revelation alone, they would not excel them, who in the beſt Management of their own Reaſonings, *knew not God*, but waxed vain in their Imaginations.

WITH reſpect unto this *Univerſal Darkneſs*, that is, Ignorance of God, with horrid Confuſion accompanying it in the Minds of Men, Chriſt is called, and is, the *Light of Men*, the *Light of the World*, becauſe in and by him alone this Darkneſs is diſpelled, as he is the *Son of Righteouſneſs*.

2. THIS Darkneſs in the Minds of Men, this Ignorance of God, his Nature and his Will, was the *Original of all Evil* unto the World, and yet continues ſo to be. For,

1. HEREON did Satan erect his Kingdom and Throne, obtaining in his Deſign until he bare himſelf as *the God of this World*, and was ſo eſteemed by the moſt. He exalted himſelf by Vertue of this *Darkneſs* (as he is *the Prince of Darkneſs*,) into the Place and Room of God, as the Object of the Religious Worſhip of Men. For the things which the *Gentiles ſacrificed, they ſacrificed unto Devils, and not to God*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 21. *Levit.* 17. 7. *Chap.* 32. 17. *Pſal.* 108. 27. *Gal.* 3. 8. This is the Territory of Satan; yea, the Power and Scepter of his Kingdom in the Minds of the *Children of Diſobedience*. Hereby he maintains his Dominion unto this Day in many and

great Nations, and with individual perſons innumerable.

2. THIS is the ſpring of all wickedneſs and confuſion among men themſelves. Hence aroſe that flood of Abominations in the *Old World*, which God took away with a *Flood of Deſolation*: Hence were the ſins of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, which he revenged with *fire from Heaven*. In brief: All the Rage, Blood, Confuſion, Deſolations, Cruelties, Oppreſſions, Villanies, which the World hath been, and is filled withal, whereby the ſouls of men have been, and are *flouded* into eternal deſtruction, have all ariſen from this corrupt Fountain of the Ignorance of God.

3. OF ſuch as thoſe deſcribed, we are the *Poſterity* and Off-ſpring. Our Fore-fathers in this Nation, were given up unto as brutiſh a *ſervice of the Devil*, as any Nation under the Sun. It is therefore an effect of infinite mercy, that the day hath dawned on us, poor *Gentiles*, and that the *day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us*. See the glory of this Grace expreſſed, *Epheſ.* 3. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. God might have left us to periſh in the blindneſs and ignorance of our Fore-fathers; but of his own accord, and by his own powerful Grace alone, he hath *tranſlated us out of darkneſs into his marvellous light*. But alas! the horrible ingratitude of men, for the glorious light of the Goſpel, and the abuſe of it, will iſſue in a ſore revenge.

GOD was known under the Old Teſtament, by *the Revelation of his Word*, and the Inſtitution of his Worſhip. This was the glory and priviledge of *Iſrael*, as the *Pſalmiſt* declares, *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. *He ſheweth his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and his judgments unto Iſrael; He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation*, The Church then *knew him*; yet ſo as that they had an apprehenſion that he dwelt in *thick darkneſs*, where they could not have any clear views

of

of him, *Exod.* 20. 21. *Deut.* 5. 22. 1 *Kings* 8. 12. 2 *Chron.* 6. 1. And the Reason why God so represented himself in *darkness* unto them, was to instruct them in their imperfect state, wherein they could not comprehend that glory which should afterwards be revealed. For as he is now made known in Christ, we see that *he is light, and in him there is no darkness at all.*

4. HITHERTO darkness in general covered the Earth, and gross darkness the people, as unto the knowledge of God; only there was a twilight in the Church. The day did not yet dawn, the *shadows did not flee away*, nor the *day-star shine* in the hearts of men. But when the *Son of Righteousness* did arise in his strength and beauty, when the Son of God *appeared in the flesh*, and in the discharge of his Office; God himself, as unto his Being, and manner of Existence in *three distinct persons*, with all the glorious properties of the Divine Nature, were illustriously manifested unto them that did believe, and the light of the knowledge of them dispelled all the *shadows* that were in the Church, and shone into the *darkness* which was in the world, so as that none continued ignorant of God, but those who would not see; See *Job* 1. 5, 14, 17, 18. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.

HEREIN is the Lord Christ glorious. And this is that which I shall now speak unto; namely, *How we may behold the glory of Christ* in the Representation and Revelation that is made of God and his glory, in his Person and Office, unto all that do believe. For it is not so much the declaration of the nature of the things themselves, wherein the glory of Christ doth consist, as our *way* and *duty*, in the *beholding of them*, which at present is designed.

HE calls unto us, saying, *Behold me, look unto me, and be saved*, Isa. 45, 2. What is it that we see in Christ? What do we behold in him? He asketh that Question concerning his Church, *What will ye see in the*

Shulamite? Whereto he answers, *as it were the company of two armies*, Cant. 6. 13. or the Two Churches of the Old and New Testament, in order and beauty. We may enquire, What shall we, what do we see in him? Do we see him as the *Image of the invisible God*, representing him, his Nature, Properties, and Will unto us? Do we see him as the *Character*, the *express Image of the Person of the Father*, so as that we have no need of *Philip's* Request, *Lord, shew us the Father*, because having seen him, *we have seen the Father also*, John 14. 9.

THIS is our first saving view of Christ, the first instance of our *beholding his glory by faith*. So to see him, as to see God in him, is to behold his glory; for herein is he eternally glorious. And this is that Glory whose view we ought to long for, and labour after. And if we see it not, we are yet in darkness; yea, tho' we say we see, we are blind like others. So *David* longed and prayed for it, when yet he could behold it only in Types and Shadows, *Psal.* 63. 1, 2. *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen them in the sanctuary.* For there was in the Sanctuary an obscure representation of the Glory of God in Christ. How much more should we prize that view of it, which we may have with open face, tho' yet *as in a glass*? 2 Cor. 3. 18.

MOSES when he had seen the Works of God, which were great and marvellous, yet found not himself satisfied therewith: Wherefore after all, he prays that God *would shew him his Glory*, *Exod.* 33. 18. He knew that the Ultimate Rest, Blessedness and Satisfaction of the Soul, is not in seeing the *works* of God, but the *Glory of God* himself. Therefore did he desire some immediate dawnings of it upon him in this World. *I beseech thee shew me thy Glory.* And if we have right apprehensions of the Future State of Blessedness, we cannot but have the same desire

of

of seeing *more of his Glory* in this life. But the Question is, How we may attain it? If we are left unto our selves in this Enquiry, if we have no other way for it, but the immediate fixing of our thoughts on the Immensity of the Divine Nature, we must come every one to the Conclusion that *Agur* makes on the like consideration; *Surely I am more brutish than any Man, and have not the Understanding of a Man; I neither learned Wisdom, nor have the Knowledge of the Holy. Who hath ascended up into Heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fist? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his sons name, if thou canst tell, Prov.* 30. 2, 3, 4.

IT is in Christ alone, that we may have a clear distinct view of the Glory of God and his Excellencies: For him, and him *alone* hath he appointed the representative of himself unto us: And we shall take an Account hereof in one or two especial Instances.

See Joh. 1. 18. Chap. 14. 7, 8, 9, 10. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Col. 1. 16. Ephes. 3. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Heb. 1. 2.

1. *INFINITE Wisdom* is one of the most glorious Properties of the Divine Nature: It is that which is directive of all the external Works of God, wherein the Glory of all the other Excellencies of God is manifested; wherefore the manifestation of the whole Glory of God proceeds originally from *Infinite Wisdom*. But as *Job* speaks, *Where shall this Wisdom be found, and what is the place of understanding? Chap.* 28. 12. *Can we by searching, find out God? Can we find out the Almighty to perfection? Chap.* 11. 7. As it is in it self an Essential, Eternal Property of the Divine Nature, we can have no comprehension of it: We can but adore it in that infinite distance wherein we stand from God; but in its Operations and Effects it may be discerned; for they are designed of God for its manifestation. Among these the most excellent is the contri-

vance of the great Work of the Salvation of the Church; ſo it is celebrated by the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 3. 9, 10, 11. *To make all Men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the World, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt, to the intent, that now unto the principalities and powers in Heavenly places might be known by the Church, the manifold Wiſdom of God.*

If we have any Intereſt in God, if we have any hopes of Bleſſedneſs in *beholding of his Glory* unto Eternity, we cannot but deſire a view (ſuch as is attainable) of this Infinite *manifold Wiſdom* of *God* in this life. But it is in Chriſt alone that we can diſcern any thing of it; for him hath the Father choſen and ſealed to repreſent it unto us. *All the Treaſures of this Wiſdom are hid*, laid up, and laid out *in him*: Herein lies the eſſence and form of Faith. Believers by it do ſee the Wiſdom of God in Chriſt, in his Perſon and Office: *Chriſt the Wiſdom of God*; Unbelievers ſee it not, as the Apoſtle argues, 1 *Cor.* 1. 22, 23, 24.

IN beholding the Glory of this Infinite Wiſdom of God in Chriſt, we *behold his own Glory* alſo; the Glory given him of his Father; for this is his Glory, that in and by him, and him alone the Wiſdom of God is manifeſted and repreſented unto us. When God appointed him as the great and only means of this end, *he gave him honour and glory* above the whole Creation: for it is but little of Divine Wiſdom which the works of it declare, in compariſon of what is manifeſted in Chriſt Jeſus. We no way deny or extenuate the manifeſtation that is made of the *Wiſdom of God* in the works of Creation and Providence. It is ſufficient to detect the folly of *Atheiſm* and and Idolatry, and was deſigned of God unto that end. But it's *comparative inſufficiency*, with reſpect unto the re-repreſentation of it in Chriſt, as unto the ends of knowing God aright, and living unto him, the Scripture doth abundantly

abundantly atteſt. And the abuſe of it was *Catholic*, as the Apoſtle declares, *Rom.* 1. 20. &c. To ſee this Wiſdom clearly, is our Wiſdom; and a due apprehenſion of it, fills the Souls of Believers with *joy unſpeakable, and full of Glory.*

2. WE may alſo inſtance in the *Love of God.* The Apoſtle tells us, that *God is Love*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 8. Divine Love is not to be conſidered only in its effects, but in its Nature and Eſſence; and ſo it is *God himſelf*; *For God is Love.* And a bleſſed Revelation this is of the Divine Nature: It caſts out Envy, Hatred, Malice, Revenge, with all their Fruits, in Rage, Fierceneſs, Implacability, Perſecution, Murther, into the Territories of Satan. They belong not unto God in his Nature or Actings; for *God is Love.* So the ſame Apoſtle tells us, that he who *ſlew his Brother, was of the wicked one*, 1 Joh. 3. 12. He was of the Devil his Father, and his works did he do.

BUT the Enquiry is as before; How ſhall we have a view of this *Love*, of God as Love? By what way or means ſhall we behold the Glory of it? It is hidden from all living, in God himſelf. The Wiſe *Philoſophers*, who diſcourſed ſo much of the *Love of God*, knew nothing of this, that *God is Love.* The *Moſt* of the Natural Notions of men about it are *corrupt*, and the *beſt* of them *weak* and imperfect. Generally the Thoughts of men about it, are, that he is of a facile and eaſie Nature, one that they may make bold withal in all their occaſions, as the *Pſalmiſt* declares, *Pſal.* 50. 21. And whereas it muſt be learned in its Effects, Operations and Divine Ways of its manifeſtation, thoſe who know not Chriſt, know nothing of them; and many things in Providence do interpoſe to hinder our view of this Love; for although that indeed *God is Love*, yet *his wrath is revealed from Heaven againſt the ungodlineſs of Men*: As all things at this day are filled with Evidences of his anger and diſpleaſure: How then ſhall

we know, wherein ſhall we behold the Glory of God in this, that he is *Love*? The Apoſtle declares it in the next words, *ver.* 9. *Herein was manifeſt the love of God towards us, becauſe God ſent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him.* This is the only Evidence given us that *God is Love.* Hereby alone is the Divine Nature as *ſuch* made known unto us; namely in the Miſſion, Perſon, and Office of the Son of God; Without this all is in Darkneſs as unto the true Nature and ſupream Operation of this Divine Love.

HEREIN do we behold the Glory of Chriſt himſelf, even in this life. This Glory was given him of the Father: Namely, That he now ſhould declare and evidence that *God is Love*; and he did ſo, *that in all things he might have the Preheminence.* Herein we may ſee how Excellent, how Beautiful, how Glorious and Deſirable he is, ſeeing in him alone we have a due Repreſentation of God *as he is Love*, which is the moſt joyful Sight of God that any Creature can obtain. He who beholds not the Glory of Chriſt herein, is utterly ignorant of thoſe Heavenly Myſteries; he knoweth neither God nor Chriſt; he hath neither the Father nor the Son. He knows not God, becauſe he knows not the holy Properties of his Nature in the Principal way deſigned by infinite Wiſdom for their Manifeſtation; he knows not Chriſt, becauſe he ſees not the Glory of God in him. Wherefore whatever Notions Men may have from the Light of Nature, or from the Works of Providence, that there is *Love in God*, however they may adorn them in elegant affecting Expreſſions: Yet from them no Man can know that *God is Love*, In the Revelation hereof Chriſt hath the Preeminence; nor can any Man comprehend any thing of it aright but in him. It is that which the whole Light of the Creation cannot diſcover; for it is the Spring and Center of the Myſtery of Godlineſs.

THESE

THESE things are of the *deep things of God*, such as belong unto that *Wisdom of God in a Mystery*, which they that are Carnal cannot receive, as the Apostle testifies, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. But the meanest Believer who lives in the Exercise of Faith, may have an Understanding of them so far as is needful unto his Love and Obedience. The Sum of the whole is this; if you would behold the Glory of Christ, as the great Means of your Sanctification and Consolation, as the only Preparation for the beholding of his Glory in Eternal Blessedness: Consider what of God is made known and *represented* unto you in him, wherein God purposed and designed to glorifie himself in him: Now this is all that may be known of God in a saving manner; especially his *Wisdom*, his *Love*, his Goodness, Grace and Mercy, whereon the Life of our Souls doth depend; And the Lord Christ being appointed the only Way and Means hereof, how exceeding glorious must he be in the Eyes of them that do believe!

THESE things being premised, I shall close this first Consideration of that *Glory of Christ which we behold by Faith in this World*, with some such Observations, as may excite us unto the Practise of this great Duty, and Improvement of this great Priviledge; the greatest which on this side Heaven we can be made Partakers of.

THERE are some who regard not these things at all, but rather despise them. They never entertain any serious thoughts of obtaining a View of the Glory of God in Christ, which is to be Unbelievers. They look on him as a *Teacher* that came forth from God to reveal his Will, and to teach us his Worship: and so indeed he was. But this they say was the *sole use of his Person in Religion*, which is *Mahumetism*. The Manifestation of all the holy Properties of the Divine Nature, with the Representation of them unto Angels above, and the Church in this World, as he is the *Image of the invisible God*, in the Constitution

of his Perſon, and the Diſcharge of his Office, are things they regard not; yea, they deſpiſe and ſcorn what is profeſſed concerning them; for Pride and Contempt of others were always the ſafeſt Covert of Ignorance; otherwiſe it would ſeem ſtrange, that Men ſhould openly boaſt of their own Blindneſs. But theſe Conceptions of Mens Minds are influenced by that Unbelief of his Divine Perſon, which maketh havock of Chriſtianity at this Day in the World.

I ſpeak of them, whoſe minds are better diſpoſed towards heavenly things; and unto them I ſay, *Wherefore do you love Jeſus Chriſt?* for ſo you profeſs to do. Wherefore do you truſt in him? Wherefore do you honour him? Wherefore do you deſire to be in Heaven with him? Can you give a *reaſon of this hope* that is in you? An account why you do all or any of theſe things? If you cannot, all that you pretend towards him, is but fancy and imagination; you *fight uncertainly as men beating the air*; or is one of your reaſons hereof, That in him you *do by Faith behold that glory of God*, with the Holy Properties of his Nature, and their Principal Operations, in order unto your own Salvation and Bleſſedneſs, which otherwiſe would have been eternally hid from you? Hereon is he *precious unto them that do believe.*

LET us therefore, as many as *are ſpiritual, be thus minded.* Let us make uſe of this *Priviledge* with rejoycing, and be found in the diſcharge of this *Duty* with diligence: For thus to *behold the glory of Chriſt* is both our priviledge and our duty. The duties of the Law were a burthen and a yoke; but thoſe of the Goſpel are Priviledges and Advantages.

IT is a Promiſe concerning the days of the New Teſtament, that our *eyes ſhall ſee the King in his beauty*, Iſa. 33. 17. We ſhall behold the Glory of Chriſt in its Luſtre and Excellency: What is this *Beauty* of the King of

Saints?

Saints? Is it not, that God is in him, and he is the great representative of his Glory unto us? Wherefore in the contemplation of this Glory consists the principal exercise of Faith: And who can declare the Glory of this Privilege, That we who are born in Darkness, and deserved to be cast out into utter Darkness, should be *translated into this marvellous Light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ.*

WHAT are all the stained Glories, the fading Beauties of this World? Of all that the Devil shewed our Saviour from the Mount? What are they in comparison of one View of the Glory of God represented in Christ, and of the Glory of Christ as his great Representative?

THE most pernicious effect of Unbelief under the preaching of the Gospel is, that together with an influence of Power from Satan, *it blinds the eyes of mens minds, that they should not see this Glory of Christ*, whereon they perish eternally, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

BUT the most of those who at this day are *called Christians* are strangers unto this duty: Our Lord Jesus Christ told the *Pharisees*, that notwithstanding all their boasting of the knowledge of God, they had not *heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape*; that is as *Moses* did. They had no real acquaintance with him, they had no spiritual view of his Glory; and so it is amongst our selves. Notwithstanding the general profession that is of the Knowledge of Christ, they are but few who thus behold his Glory; and therefore few who are transformed into his Image and Likeness.

SOME Men speak much of the *Imitation of Christ*, and *following of his Example*; and it were well if we could see more of it really in effect. But no Man shall ever become *like unto him*, by bare *Imitation* of his Actions, without that view or intuition of his Glory which alone is ac-

companied with a transforming power to *change them into the same image*.

THE Truth is, the best of us all are wofully defective in this Duty, and many are discouraged from it, because a Pretence of it in some hath degenerated into Superstition: But we are loth at any time seriously to engage in it, and come with an unwilling kind of Willingness, unto the Exercise of our Minds in it.

THOUGHTS of this *Glory of Christ* are too *high* for us, or too *hard* for us, such as we cannot long delight in; we turn away from them with a kind of Weariness; yet are they of the same Nature in general with our beholding of the Glory of Christ in Heaven, wherein there shall be no weariness or Satiety unto Eternity. Is not the Cause of it, that we are unspiritual or carnal, having our Thoughts and Affections wonted to give Entertainment unto other things? For this is the principal Cause of our Unreadiness and Incapacity to exercise our Minds in and about the great Mysteries of the Gospel. 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2, 3. And it is so with us moreover, because we do not stir up our selves with Watchfulness and Diligence in continual Actings of Faith on this Blessed Object. This is that which keeps many of us at so low an Ebb, as unto the Powers of an Heavenly Life, and spiritual Joys.

DID we abound in this Duty, in this Exercise of Faith, our Life in walking before God would be more sweet and pleasant unto us; our spiritual Light and Strength would have a daily Encrease; we should more reprident the Glory of Christ in our Ways and Walking, than usually we do; and Death it self would be most welcome unto us.

THE *Angels* themselves *desire to look* into the things of the Glory of Christ, 1 *Pet.* 1. 10, 12. There is in them Matter of Enquiry and Instruction for the most high and holy

holy Spirits in Heaven. The manifold Wiſdom of God in them is made known unto *Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places by the Church*, Epheſ. 3. 10. And ſhall we neglect that which is the Object of *Angelical* Diligence to enquire into; eſpecially conſidering that we are more than they concerned in it?

IS Chriſt then thus glorious in our Eyes? Do we *ſee the Father in him*, or by ſeeing of him? Do we ſedulouſly, daily contemplate on the Wiſdom, Love, Grace, Goodneſs, Holineſs, and Righteouſneſs of God, as revealing and manifeſting themſelves in him? Do we ſufficiently conſider, that the *immediate Viſion* of this Glory in Heaven will be our everlaſting Bleſſedneſs? Doth the *imperfect View* which we have of it here, encreaſe our Deſires after the *perfect Sight* of it above? With reſpect unto theſe Enquiries, I ſhall briefly ſpeak unto ſundry ſorts of Men.

SOME will ſay they underſtand not theſe things, nor any Concernment of their own in them. If they are true, yet are they *Notions* which they may ſafely be without the Knowledge of; for ſo far as they can diſcern, they have no Influence on Chriſtian Practice, or Duties of Morality. And the preaching of them doth but take off the Minds of Men from more neceſſary Duties. But *if the Goſpel be hid it is hid unto them that periſh.* And unto the Objection I ſay:

1. NOTHING is more fully and clearly revealed in the Goſpel, than that unto us Jeſus Chriſt is the *Image of the inviſible God* that he is the *Character of the Perſon of the Father*, ſo as that in *ſeeing him*, we ſee the Father alſo; that we have the *Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in his Face alone*, as hath been proved. This is the Principal Fundamental Myſtery and Truth of the Goſpel; and which if it be not received, believed, owned, all other Truths are uſeleſs unto our Souls. To refer all the

Testimonies that are given hereunto, to the Doctrine which he taught, in Contradistinction unto his Person, as acting in the Discharge of his Office, is *Antievangilical*, *Antichristian*, turning the whole Gospel into a Fable.

2. IT is so, that the *Light of Faith* is given unto us principally to enable us to *behold the Glory of God in Christ*; to contemplate on it, as unto all the Ends of its Manifestation. So is it expressly affirmed, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. If we have not this Light, as it is communicated by the Power of God unto them that do believe, *Ephes.* 1. 17, 18, 19. we must be Strangers unto the whole Mystery of the Gospel, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.

3. THAT in the *beholding of the Glory of God in Christ*, we behold his Glory also. For herein is he infinitely glorious above the whole Creation, in that in and by him alone the Glory of the Invisible God is represented unto us. Herein do our Souls live. This is that whereby the Image of God is renewed in us, and we are made like unto the First born.

4. THIS is so far from being unnecessary unto *Christian Practice, and the sanctified Duties of Morality*, that he knows not Christ, he knows not the Gospel, he knows not the Faith of the Catholick Church, who imagins that they can be performed acceptably without it. Yea, this is the Root whence all other *Christian Duties* do spring, and whereon they grow, whereby they are distinguished from the Works of Heathens. He is no Christian who believes not that Faith in the Person of Christ is the Spring of all Evangelical Obedience; or who knows not that this Faith respects the Revelation of the Glory of God in him.

IF these things are so, as they are the most important Truths of the Gospel, and whose Denial overthrows the Foundation of Faith, and is ruinous to Christian Religion: Certainly it is our Duty to live in the constant Exercise

cise of Faith with respect unto this Glory of Christ. And we have sufficient Experience of what kind of Morality the Ignorance of it hath produced.

OTHERS there are who may be some way *Strangers*, but are no way *Enemies* unto this Mystery, and to the practical Exercise of Faith therein: Unto such I shall tender the ensuing Directions.

1. RECKON in your Minds, that this *beholding of the Glory of Christ* by beholding the Glory of God, and all his Holy Properties in him, is the greatest *Priviledge* whereof in this Life we can be made Partakers. The Dawning of Heaven is in it, and the *First Fruits of Glory*; for this is *Life Eternal* to know the Father, and whom he hath sent Christ Jesus, *John* 17. 3. Unless you value it, unless you esteem it as such a *Priviledge*, you will not enjoy it; and that which is not valued according unto its Worth, is despised. It is not enough to think it a *Priviledge*, an *Advantage*; but it is to be *valued* above other things according unto its *Greatness* and Excellency. *Destruction and Death say we have heard the Fame of it with our Ears.* Job 28. 22. And if we do *no more*, we shall die Strangers unto it: We are to *cry after this Knowledge, and lift up our Voice for this Understanding*, if we design to attain it.

2. AS it is a great *Priviledge* which requires a due Valuation; so it is a great *Mystery* which requires much Spiritual Wisdom to the right understanding of it, and to direct in its Practise, 1 *Cor.* 2. 4, 5. Flesh and Blood will not reveal it unto us, but we must be taught of God, to apprehend it, *John* 1. 12, 13. *Mat.* 16. 16, 17. Mere unsanctified Reason will never enable us unto, nor guide us in the Discovery of this Duty. Men are not so vain as to hope for Skill and Understanding in the Mystery of a secular Art or Trade, without the diligent Use of those Means whereby it may be attained; and shall we suppose

that

that we may be furnished with spiritual Skill and Wisdom in this sacred Mystery, without Diligence in the Use of the Means appointed of God for the attaining of it? The Principal of them is *Fervent Prayer*. Pray then with *Moses*, that God would *shew you this his Glory*; pray with the Apostle, that *the Eyes of your Understandings may be enlightened to behold it*; Pray that the *God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of him*. Fill your Minds with spiritual Thoughts and Contrivances about them. Slothful and lazy Souls never obtain one View of this Glory; the *Lion in the way* deters them from attempting it. Being carnal, they abhor all Diligence in the Use of spiritual Means, such as Prayer and Meditation on things unto them uneasie, unpleasing and difficult. Unto others the Way partakes of the Nature of the End; the Means of obtaining a View of the Glory of Christ are of the same Kind, of the same Pleasantness, with that View it self in their Proportion.

3. LEARN the Use hereof from the Actings of *contrary vitious Habits*. When the Minds of Men are vehemently fixed on the pursuit of their Lusts, they will be continually ruminating on the Objects of them, and have a thousand Contrivances about them, until their *Eyes become full of an Adultéress and they cannot cease from sinning*, as the Apostle speaks. The Objects of their Lusts have framed and raised an Image of themselves in their Minds, and transformed them into their own Likeness, is this the way of them who *go down to the Chambers of Death*? Do they thus frame their Souls, and make them meet for Destruction, until their Words, Gestures, Actions, proclaim the Frame of their Minds unto all that look upon them? And shall we be slothful and negligent in the Contemplation of that Glory which transforms our Minds into its

own

own Likeneſs, ſo as that the Eyes of our Underſtandings ſhall be continually filled with it, until we ſee him and behold him continually, ſo as never to ceaſe from the holy Acts of Delight in him, and Love unto him?

4. WOULD we then *behold the Glory of God*, as he manifeſteth it in and by the holy Properties of his Nature, with their bleſſed Operations and Effects, without which we have nothing of the Power of Religion in us, whatever we pretend; this alone is the Way of it. Go to the whole Creation, and all things contained in it; they can ſay no more, but *we have heard the Fame and Report of theſe things*, and what we have heard we declare; but it is but a *little Portion* of them that we are acquainted withal. *The Heavens* indeed *declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his handy Work. The inviſible things of God are underſtood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead.* But comparatively, it is but *little* that we can hence learn of theſe things, as unto what we may behold of them in Chriſt Jeſus. How blind herein was the beſt *Philoſopher* in compariſon of the meaneſt of the *Apoſtles*, yea, of him who is leaſt in the Kingdom of *Heaven*?

BUT herein it is required, that we reſt not in the *Notion of this* Truth, and a bare Aſſent unto the Doctrine of it. The affecting Power of it upon our Hearts, is that which we ſhould aim at. Wherein doth the Bleſſedneſs of the Saints above conſiſt? Is it not herein, that they behold and ſee the Glory of God in Chriſt? And what is the Effect of it upon thoſe bleſſed Souls? Doth it not change them into the ſame Image, or make them like unto Chriſt? Doth it not fill and ſatiate them with Joy, Reſt, Delight, Complacency and ineffable Satisfaction? Do we expect, do we deſire the ſame State of Bleſſedneſs? It is our *preſent View* of the Glory of Chriſt which is our *Initiation* thereinto, if we are exerciſed in it,

until

until we have an Experience of its *Transforming Power* in our Souls.

THESE things are, it may be, of little use unto some. Such as are Babes in spiritual Knowledge and Understanding, either because they are *Carnal*, 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. or *slothful in hearing*, Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14. are not capable of these Divine Mysteries. And therefore the Apostle did in an especial manner declare this Wisdom of God in a Mystery unto them that were *perfect*, 1 Cor. 2. 6, 7. That is, who were more grown in *spiritual Knowledge, and had their Senses exercised to discern Good and Evil.* It is unto them who are exercised in the Contemplation of invisible things, who delight to walk in the more retired Paths of Faith and Love, to whom they are precious.

SOME few Inferences from the Whole of what hath been declared, shall put a Close to this part of our Discourse.

1. THE Holy Properties of the Divine Nature are not only represented unto our Faith in Christ as unto their own essential Glory, but as they are in the *Exercise of their Powers* for the Salvation of the Church. In him do we behold the Wisdom, Goodness, Love, Grace, Mercy and Power of God acting themselves in the *Contrivance, Constitution*, and efficacious *Accomplishment* of the great Work of our Redemption and Salvation. This gives, as unto us, an unutterable Lustre unto the Native Amiableness of the Divine Excellencies. The *Wisdom* and *Love* of God are in themselves infinitely Glorious, infinitely Amiable; nothing can be added unto them, there can be no encrease of their essential Glory. Howbeit as they are eternally resident in the *Divine Nature*, and absolutely the same with it, we cannot so comprehend them, as to have an endearing satiating View of their Glory: But as they are exerted in the Work of the Redemption and

nd Salvation of the Church, as they are expreſſed, communicating their bleſſed Effects unto the Souls of them hat do believe, which is done only in Chriſt; ſo the Beams of their Glory ſhine unto us with unſpeakable Refreſhment and Joy, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. Hence the Apoſtle on the Conſideration of the Actings of the Holy Properties of God in this bleſſed Work, falls into that Contemplation: *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways paſt finding out! For who hath not known the Mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counſellor, or who hath firſt given unto him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be Glory for ever, Amen,* Rom. 11. 33, 34, 35, 36.

2. *IN and through Chriſt we do believe in God,* 1 Pet. 1. 24. This is the Life of our Souls. God himſelf in the infinite Perfections of his Divine Nature, is the *ultimate* Object of our Faith, but he is not here the *immediate* Object of it, but the Divine Way and Means of the Manifeſtation of himſelf and them unto us, are ſo. *Through Chriſt we believe in God.* By our Belief in him, we come to place our Faith ultimately in God himſelf; and this we can no otherwiſe do, but by *beholding the Glory of God* in him, as hath been declared.

3. THIS is the only way whereby we may attain the *ſaving, ſanctifying Knowledge of God*; Without this, every *Beam of Divine Light* that ſhines on us, or gleans from without (as the *Light ſhineth into* Darkneſs when the Darkneſs *comprehendeth it* not, Joh. 1. 5.) Every Spark that ariſeth from the Remainders of the Light of Nature *within*, do rather amaze the Minds of Men, than lead them into the ſaving Knowledge of God. So a Glance of Light in a dark Night giving a tranſient View of various Objects, and paſſing away, doth rather amaze, than

direct

direct a Traveller, and leave him more exposed unto wandring than before. Such were all those Notions of the Divine Being and its Excellencies, which those who *boasted themselves to be wise* among the Heathen embraced and improved. They did but fluctuate in their Minds; they did not transform them into the Image and Likeness of God, as the saving Knowledge of him doth, *Col.* 3. 10.

SO the Apostle expresseth this Truth; *Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World? Hath not God made foolish the Wisdom of this World? For after that in the Wisdom of God, the World by Wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Gentiles seek after Wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness; but unto them that are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God,* 1 Cor. 1. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

AFTER it was evident unto all, that the *World*, the *Wise*, the Studious, the Contemplative Part of it, in the *Wisdom of God*, disposing them into that Condition, wherein they were left unto themselves, in their own Wisdom, their Natural Light and Reason did not, could not come to the saving Knowledge of God, but were puffed up into a Contempt of the only way of the Revelation of himself, as Weakness and Folly; it pleased God then to manifest all their *Wisdom* to be Folly; and to establish the only Means of the Knowledge of himself in Christ Jesus.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The Glory of Christ in the Mysterious Constitution of his Person.

THE Second Thing wherein we may *behold the Glory of Christ given him of his Father, is* in the Mysterious Constitution of his Person, as he is God and Man in one and the same Person. There are in him, in his one single, *individual Person*, two distinct Natures; The one Eternal, Infinite, Immense, Almighty, the Form and Essence of God; The other having a beginning in Time, Finite, Limited, Confined unto a certain Place, which is our Nature, which he took on him when he was *made Flesh, and dwelt among us.* The Declaration of the Nature of this Glory, is a *Part of my Discourse of the Person of Christ*, whereunto I refer the Reader: My present Design is of another Nature.

THIS is that *Glory* whose Beams are so illustrious, as that the blind World cannot bear the Light and Beauty of them. Multitudes begin openly to deny this *Incarnation of the Son of God*, this *Personal Union* of God and Man in their distinct Natures. They deny that there is either Glory or Truth in it; and it will ere long appear, it begins already to evidence it self what *greater Multitudes* there are, who yet *do not*, who yet *dare not* openly reject the Doctrine of it, who in Truth believe it not, nor see any Glory in it. Howbeit this Glory, is the Glory of our Religion, the Glory of the Church, the sole Rock whereon it is built, the only Spring of present Grace, and future Glory.

THIS

THIS is that Glory which the *Angels* themselves desire to behold, the Mystery whereof they *bow down to look into*, 1 Pet. 1. 12. So was their Desire represented by the *Cherubims* in the most holy Place of the Tabernacle; for they were a Shadow of the Ministry of Angels in the Church. The Ark and Mercy Seat were a Type of Christ in the Discharge of his Office; and these *Cherubims* were made standing over them, as being in Heaven above; but earnestly looking down upon them in a Posture of Reverence and Adoration. So they did of Old, and in their present Contemplation of it consists no small part of their Eternal Blessedness.

HEREON depends the Ruine of Satan and his Kingdom. His Sin, so far as we can conceive, consisted of two Parts (1.) His *Pride* against the *Person of the Son of God*, by whom he was created. *For by him were all things created that are* (or were when first created) *in Heaven, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities or Powers*, Col. 1. 16. Against him he lifted up himself, which was the Beginning of his Transgression. (2.) Envy against Mankind made in the Image of God, of the Son of God the First-born. This compleated his Sin; nothing was now left whereon to act his Pride and Malice. Unto his Eternal Confusion and Ruine God in infinite Wisdom unites both the Natures he had sinned against, in the one Person of the Son, who was the first Object of his Pride and Malice. Hereby his Destruction is attended with *Everlasting Shame* in the Discovery of his Folly, wherein he would have contended with infinite Wisdom, as well as Misery, by the Powers of the two Natures united in one Person.

HERE lies the *Foundation* of the Church. The Foundation of the whole Old Creation was laid in an Act of absolute Soveraign Power. Hereby God *hanged the Earth upon nothing*. But the Foundation of the Church is on this

this Mysterious immoveable Rock; *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*; on the most intimate Conjunction of the two Natures, the Divine and Humane, in themselves infinitely distant, in the same Person.

WE may name one place wherein it is gloriously represented unto us, Isa. 9. 6. *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be on his Shoulders; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* Here must the whole Church fall down and worship the Author of this wonderful Contrivance, and captivating their Understandings unto the Obedience of Faith, humbly adore what they cannot comprehend.

THIS was obscurly represented unto the Church of old, *Exo.* 3. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a Flame of Fire out of the midst of a Bush, and he looked, and behold the Bush burned with Fire, and the Bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great Sight, why the Bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the Bush, and said, Moses, Moses; and he said, here am I. And he said, draw not nigh hither, put off thy Shooes from off thy Feet, for the Place whereon thou standest is holy Ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy Fathers, the God of Abraham,* &c.

THIS *Fire* was a Type or Declaration of the Presence of God in the Person of the Son. For with respect unto the Father he is called an *Angel*, the Angel of the Covenant; but absolutely in himself, he was *Jehovah*, the *God of Abraham*, &c. And of his Presence the *Fire* was a proper Representation. For in his *Nature*, he is as a *Consuming Fire*; and his present Work was the Delivery of the Church out of a *Fiery Tryal*. This *Fire* placed it self in a *Bush*, where it burned, but the *Bush* was not consumed. And although the Continuance of the *Fire* in the

Buſh, was but for a ſhort ſeaſon, a preſent Appearance; yet thence was God ſaid to *dwell* in the Buſh; *The good will of him that dwelt in the Buſh*, Deut. 33. 16. And this is ſo ſpoken, becauſe the being of the Fire in the Buſh for a ſeaſon, was a Type of him in whom the *fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, and that for ever, *Col.* 2. 9. Of him who was *made fleſh and dwelt among us*, Joh. 1. 14. The Eternal *Fire* of the Divine Nature dwells in the *Buſh* of our frail Nature, yet is not conſumed thereby. God thus *dwells in this Buſh*, with all his *Good will* towards Sinners.

MOSES looked on this ſight as a *marvellous* and *wondrous* thing. And if it were ſo in the *Type*, what is it in the *Truth*, Subſtance and Reality of it?

AND by Direction given unto him, to *put off his ſhooes*, we are taught to caſt away all fleſhly *Imaginations* and carnal Affections, that by pure Acts of Faith, we may behold this Glory, the Glory of the only begotten of the Father.

I DESIGN not here to inſiſt on the Explication, or Confirmation of this glorious Truth concerning the conſtitution of the Perſon of Chriſt in and by his Incarnation. What I can comprehend, what I do believe concerning it, I have fully declared in a large peculiar Treatiſe. Here I take the Truth it ſelf as known, or as it may be thence learned. My preſent Buſineſs is only to ſtir up the Minds of Believers unto a due *Contemplation* of the Glory of Chriſt in the ſacred Myſterious Conſtitution of his Perſon, as God and Man in one. So much as we abide herein, ſo much do *we live by the Faith of the Son of God*; and God can by a Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation open the Eyes of our Underſtandings, that we may *behold this Glory* unto our ineffable Conſolation and Joy. And unto the diligent Diſcharge of our Duty herein, I ſhall offer the enſuing Directions.

1. LET

1. LET us get it fixed on our Souls, and in our Minds, that this *Glory of Christ* in the Divine Conſtitution of his Perſon, is the beſt, the moſt noble, uſeful, beneficial Object, that we can be converſant about in our Thoughts, or or cleave unto in our Affections.

What are all other things in compariſon of the *Knowledge of Chriſt*? In the Judgment of the great Apoſtle, they are but *Loſs and Dung*, Phil. 3. 8, 9, 10. So they were to him, and if they are not ſo to us, we are carnal.

WHAT is the World, and what are the things thereof which moſt men ſpend their Thoughts about, and fix their Affections on? The *Pſalmiſt* gives his Judgment about them, in compariſon of a View of this Glory of Chriſt, *Pſal.* 4. 6. *Many ſay, who will ſhew us any good?* Who will give and help us to attain ſo much in and of this World, as will give Reſt and Satisfaction unto our Minds? That is the good enquired after. But, ſaith he, *Lord lift up the Light of thy Countenance upon us.* The Light of the Glory of God in the Face of Chriſt Jeſus, is that ſatisfactory Good alone, which I deſire and ſeek after.

THE Scripture reproacheth the Vanity and Folly of the Minds of Men, in that *they ſpend their Money for that which is not Bread, and their Labour for that which profiteth not.* They ingage the Vigor of their Spirits about periſhing things, when they have durable Subſtance and Riches propoſed unto them.

HOW do Men for the moſt part exerciſe their Minds? What are they converſant about in their Thoughts?

SOME by them *make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil it in the Luſts thereof*, as *Rom.* 13. 14. They ſearch about continually in their Thoughts for Objects ſuited unto their Luſts and carnal Affections, coyning, framing and ſtamping of them in their Imaginations. They fix their

Eyes with delight on Toads and Serpents, with all noiſome filthy Objects; refuſing in the mean time, to behold the Beauty and Glory of the Light of the Sun. So is it with all that ſpend their Thoughts about the Objects of their ſinful Pleaſures, refuſing to look up after one view of this *Glory of Chriſt*.

SOME keep their Thoughts in continual Exerciſe about the Things of this World, as unto the Advantages and Emoluments which they expect from them. Hereby are they transformed into the Image of the World, becoming earthly, carnal and vain. Is it becauſe there is *no God in Iſrael that theſe Applications are made unto the Idol of Ekron?* That there is no Glory, no deſirableneſs in Chriſt for Men to enquire after, and fix their Minds upon? Oh the blindneſs, the darkneſs, the folly of poor ſinners? *Whom* do they deſpiſe, and *for what?*

SOME of more refined parts and notional Minds, do ariſe unto a ſedulous Meditation on the Works of Creation and Providence. Hence many excellent Diſcourſes on that Subject, adorned with Eloquence, are publiſhed among us. And a Work this is worthy of our Nature, and ſuited unto our rational Capacities; yea, the firſt end of our natural Endowment with them. But in all theſe things there is *no Glory* in compariſon of what is propoſed unto us in the myſterious Conſtitution of the Perſon of Chriſt. The Sun hath no Glory, the Moon and Stars no Beauty, the Order and Influence of the Heavenly Bodies, have no Excellency in compariſon of it.

This is that which the Pſalmiſt deſigns to declare, Pſal. 8. *O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy Name in all the earth! Who haſt ſet thy Glory above the heavens. When I conſider thy heavens, the work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained; what is Man that thou art mindful of him, and the Son of man that thou viſiteſt him? For thou haſt made him a little lower than the Angels, and haſt*

crowned him with glory and honor; thou hast made him to have Dominion over the work of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet.

HE is engaged in a Contemplation of the Glory of God in his Works; and he concludes that the Fabrick of Heaven, with the *Moon and Stars* therein (for it was his Meditation by Night, when he beheld them) was exceeding glorious, and greatly to be admired. This casts his Thoughts on the poor, weak, infirm Nature of Man, which seems as nothing in comparison of those Glories above: But immediately hereon falls into an Admiration of the Wisdom, Goodness, and Love of God, *exalting that Nature* incomparably above all the Works of Creation in the Person of Jesus Christ, as the Apostle expounds this place, *Heb.* 2. 5, 6.

THIS therefore is the highest, the best, the most useful Object of our Thoughts and Affections. He who hath had a real View of *this Glory*, though he know himself to be a poor, sinful, dying *Worm* of the Earth, yet would he not be an *Angel* in Heaven, if thereby he should loose the sight of it; for this is the Center wherein all the Lines of the Manifestation of the Divine Glory do meet and rest.

LOOK unto the things of this World, Wives, Children, Possessions, Estates, Power, Friends, and Honor; how amiable are they! How desirable unto the Thoughts of the most of Men! But he who hath obtained a View of the Glory of Christ, will in the midst of them all say, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? There is none on Earth that I desire besides thee*, Psal. 73. 25. For *who in the Heavens can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the Sons of the mighty, can be compared unto the Lord?* Psal. 89. 6.

HE himself out of his infinite Love and ineffable Condescention, upon the Sight and View of his Church,

and his own Graces in her, wherewith she is adorned, doth say; *Thou hast ravished my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse, thou hast ravished my Heart with one of thine Eyes, with one Chain of thy Neck*, Cant. 4. 8. How much more ought a believing Soul, upon a View of the Glory of Christ, in whom it pleased the Father, that all Fulness should dwell, to say, Thou hast ravished my Heart, taken it away from me, *O thou whom my Soul loveth*; One Glance of thy glorious Beauty upon me, hath quite overcome me, hath left no heart in me, unto things here below? If it be not thus with us frequently, if we value not this Object of our Minds and Affections, if we are not diligent in looking up unto him, to behold his Glory, it is because we are *carnal*, and not in any good measure partakers of the promise, that *our Eyes shall see the King in his Beauty*.

2. OUR second Direction unto the same End is; That *we diligently study the Scripture, and the Revelations that are made of this Glory of Christ therein*. To behold it, is not a Work of Fancy or Imagination. It is not conversing with an Image framed by the Art of Men *without*, or that of our own Fancy *within*; but of Faith exercised on Divine Revelations. This Direction he gives us himself. Joh. 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for they are they that testifie of me*. The way whereby this is done, is fully set before us in the Example of the holy Prophets under the old Testament, 1 *Pet.* 1. 11, 12, 13.

THIS Principle is always to be retained in our Minds in *reading of the Scripture*, namely, that the Revelation and Doctrine of the Person of Christ and his Office, is the Foundation whereon all other Instructions of the Prophets and Apostles for the edification of the Church are built, and wherein to they are resolved, as is declared, *Ephes.* 2. 20, 21, 22. So our Lord Jesus Christ himself at large makes it manifest, *Luk.* 24. 26, 27, 45, 46. Lay aside the Consideration hereof, and the Scriptures are

no such thing as they pretend unto; namely, a Revelation of the Glory of God in the Salvation of the Church; nor are those of the Old Testament so at this Day unto the *Jews*, who own not this Principle, 2 *Cor.* 3. 13, 14, 15, 16. There are therefore such *Revelations* of the Person and Glory of Christ treasured up in the Scripture, from the beginning unto the end of it, as may exercise the Faith and Contemplation of Believers in this World; and shall never, during this Life, be fully discovered or understood; and in Divine Meditations of these Revelations, doth much of the *Life of Faith* consist.

THERE are three ways whereby the Glory of Christ is represented unto us in the Scripture. First, by *direct Descriptions* of his glorious Person and Incarnation. See among other places, *Gen.* 3. 15. *Psal.* 2. 7, 8, 9. *Psal.* 45. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Psal.* 68. 17, 18. *Psal.* 110. *Isa.* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Chap.* 9. 6. *Zech.* 2. 8. *Joh.* 1. 1, 2, 3. *Phil.* 2. 6, 7, 8. *Heb.* 1. 1, 2, 3. *Chap.* 2. 14, 15, 16. *Rev.* 1. 17, 18. Secondly, by *Prophecies*, Promises and express Instructions concerning him, all leading unto the Contemplation of his Glory, which are innumerable. Thirdly, By the sacred Institutions of Divine Worship under the Old Testament: For the end of them all was to represent unto the Church the Glory of Christ in the Discharge of his Office, as we shall see afterwards.

WE may take notice of an Instance in one kind under the Old Testament, and of one and another under the New.

HIS *Personal Appearances* under the Old Testament, carried in them a Demonstration of his Glory: Such was that in the Vision which *Isaiah* had, *when he saw his Glory, and spake of him*, Chap. 6. 1, 2. *I saw the Lord sitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple. About it stood the Seraphims*, &c. It was a Representation of the Glory of the Divine Presence of Christ fil-

ling his Humane Nature, the *Temple of his Body*, with a *Train* of all glorious Graces. And if this *Typical* Representation of it was so glorious, as that the *Seraphims* were not able stedfastly to behold it, but *covered their Faces* upon its Appearance, *v.* 2. how exceeding glorious is it in it self, as it is openly revealed in the Gospel!

OF the same Nature are the immediate Testimonies given unto him from Heaven in the New Testament: So the Apostle tells us, *he received from God the Father, honor, and glory, when there came such a Voice unto him from the excellent Glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 17. The Apostle intends the Time of his Transfiguration in the Mount, for so he adds, *Ver.* 18. *And this Voice which came from Heaven, we heard who were with him in the holy Mount.* Howbeit, at sundry other times he had the same Testimony, or to the same purpose, from God, even the Father in Heaven. Herein God gave him *Honor and Glory*, which all those that believe in him should behold and admire; not only those who heard this Testimony with their bodily Ears, but all unto whom it is testified in the Scripture, are obliged to look after, and contemplate on the Glory of Christ, as thus revealed and proposed. From the Throne of his Excellency by audible Voices, by visible Signs, by the opening of the Heavens above, by the descent of the holy Spirit upon him, God testified unto him as his eternal Son, and gave him therein Honor and Glory. The Thoughts of this Divine Testimony, and the Glory of Christ therein, hath often filled the Hearts of some with Joy and Delight.

THIS therefore in reading and studying the holy Scripture, we ought with all diligence to search and attend unto, as did the Prophets of old, 1 *Pet.* 11. 12. if we intend by them to be made *wise unto Salvation.*

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WE ſhould herein be as the *Merchant-man* that ſeeks for Pearls; he ſeeks for all ſorts of them, but when he hath found one of *Great Price*, he parts with all to make it his own, *Mat.* 13. 45, 46. The Scripture is the Field, the Place, the Mine where we ſearch and dig for Pearls; ſee *Prov.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Every ſacred Truth that is made effectual unto the good of our Souls, is a Pearl whereby we are enriched; but when we meet with, when we fall upon this Pearl of price, the Glory of Chriſt; this is that which the Soul of a Believer cleaves unto with joy.

THEN do we find *Food for our Souls* in the Word of Truth, then do we taſte how gracious the Lord is therein, then is the Scripture full of Refreſhment unto us, as a Spring of Living Water, when we are taken into bleſſed Views of the Glory of Chriſt therein. And we are in the beſt Frame of Duty, when the principal Motive in our Minds to contend earneſtly for retaining the poſſeſſion of the Scripture, againſt all that would deprive us of it, or diſcourage us from a daily diligent ſearch into it, is this, that they would take from us the only *Glaſs* wherein we may behold the Glory of Chriſt. This is the Glory of the Scripture, that it is the great, yea, the *only* outward Means of repreſenting unto us the Glory of Chriſt; and he is the Sun in the Firmament of it, which only hath Light in it ſelf, and communicates it unto all other things beſides.

3. ANOTHER Direction unto this ſame End, is, That having attained the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of Chriſt from the Scripture, or by the Diſpenſation of the Truth in the preaching of the Goſpel, *we would eſteem it our Duty frequently to meditate thereon.*

WANT hereof is that fundamental Miſtake which keeps many among us ſo low in their Grace, ſo regardleſs of their Priviledges. They hear of theſe things, they aſ-

ſent unto their Truth, at leaſt they do not gainſay them: but they never *ſolemnly meditate* upon them. This they eſteem a Work that is *above* them, or are *ignorant* totally of it, or eſteem themſelves not much concerned in it, or *diſlike* it as *Fanataciſm*. For it is that which no Conſiderations can ingage a carnal Mind to delight in. The Mind muſt be ſpiritual and holy, freed from earthly Affections and Encumbrances, raiſed above things here below, that can in a due manner meditate on the Glory of Chriſt. Therefore are the moſt Strangers unto this Duty, becauſe they will not be at the Trouble and Charge of that Mortification of earthly Affections, that Extirpation of ſenſual Inclinations, that Retirement from the Occaſions of Life, which are required there unto. See the *Treatiſe of Spiritual-mindedneſs*.

IT is to be feared that there are ſome who profeſs Religion with an *Appearance of Strictneſs*, who never ſeparate themſelves from all other Occaſions to *meditate on Chriſt and his Glory*. And yet with a ſtrange Inconſiſtency of Apprehenſions, they will profeſs that they deſire nothing more, than to *behold his Glory in Heaven for ever*. But it is evident even in the Light of Reaſon, that theſe things are irreconcilable. It is impoſſible that he who never meditates with delight on the Glory of Chriſt here in this World, who labors not to behold it by *Faith* as it is revealed in the Scripture, ſhould ever have any real *gracious Deſire* to behold it in Heaven. They may love and deſire the Fruition of their own Imaginations, they cannot do ſo of the Glory of Chriſt whereof they are ignorant, and wherewith they are unacquainted. It is therefore to be lamented that Men can find time for, and have inclinations to think and meditate on other things, it may be earthly and vain; but have neither Heart nor Inclinations, nor Leaſure to meditate on this glorious Object. What is the Faith and Love which ſuch Men

profeſs?

profess? how will they find themselves deceived in the Issue?

4. LET your *occasional Thoughts of Christ be many*, and multiplied every Day, he is not far from us; we may make a speedy Address unto him at any time: so the Apostle informs us, *Rom.* 10. 6, 7, 8. *Say not in thine heart who shall ascend into Heaven (that is to bring Christ down from above) or who shall descend into the deep; that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead; for the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart.* The things that Christ did, were done at a Distance from us, and they are long since past. But saith the Apostle, the *Word of the Gospel* wherein these things are revealed, and whereby an Application is made of them unto our Souls, is *nigh unto us, even in our hearts*; that is, if we are true Believers, and have mixed the Word with Faith: and so it exhibiteth Christ and all the Benefits of his Mediation unto us. If therefore this Word is in our Hearts, Christ is nigh unto us. If we turn at any time into our selves to converse with the Word that abideth in us, there we shall find him ready to receive us into Communion with himself, that is, in the Light of the Knowledge of Christ which we have by the Word, we may have sudden occasional Thoughts of him continually; and where our Minds and Affections are so filled with other things, that we are not ready for converse with him who is thus nigh unto us by the Word, we are spiritually indisposed.

SO to manifest how nigh he is unto us, it is said that *he stands at the door and knocks*, Rev. 3. 20. in the continual tender that he makes of himself and his Grace unto our Souls. For he is always accompanied with the glorious Train of his Graces, and if they are not received, he himself is not so. It is to no purpose to boast of Christ, if we have not an Evidence of his Graces in our Hearts and Lives. But unto whom he is the *Hope*

of Future Glory, unto them he is the *Life* of preſent grace.

SOMETIMES it may be, that he is withdrawn from us, ſo as that we cannot *hear his Voice, nor behold his Countenance*, nor obtain any ſence of his Love, though we ſeek him with diligence. In this ſtate all our thoughts and Meditations concerning him will be barren and fruitleſs, bringing in no ſpiritual Refreſhment into our Souls. And if we learn to be content with ſuch lifeleſs, in affecting thoughts of him, as bring in no experience of his Love, nor give us a real View of the Glory of his Perſon, we ſhall wither away as unto all the power of Religion.

WHAT is our Duty in this Caſe, is ſo fully expreſſed by the *Spouſe in the Canticles*, as repreſents it plainly unto the Minds of Believers, who have any Experience of theſe things, Chap. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *By night on my Bed I ſought him whom my Soul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. I will riſe now, and go about the City in the Streets, and in the broad ways, I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. The Watch-men that go about the City found me, to whom I ſaid, ſaw ye him whom my ſoul loveth? It was but a little I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go.* The like account ſhe gives of her ſelf, and of her Behaviour on the like Occaſion, *Chap.* 5. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

THIS is the ſubſtance of what by this Example we are inſtructed unto. The Lord Chriſt is pleaſed ſometimes to withdraw himſelf from the *ſpiritual Experience* of Believers; as unto any refreſhing ſenſe of his Love, or the freſh communications of conſolatory Graces. Thoſe who never had Experience of any ſuch thing, who never had any refreſhing communion with him, cannot be ſenſible of his *Abſence*, they never were ſo of his *Preſence*. But thoſe whom he hath viſited, to whom he hath *given of his Loves*, with whom he hath made his *Abode*, whom he

he hath refreshed, relieved and comforted, in whom he hath lived in the Power of his Grace, they know what it is to be *forsaken* by him, though but *for a moment.* And their Trouble is increased, when they seek him with diligence in the wonted ways of obtaining his presence, and cannot find him. Our Duty in this case is, to persevere in our Enquiries after him in Prayer, Meditation, Mourning, Reading, and Hearing of the Word, in all Ordinances of Divine Worship, private and publick, in diligent Obedience, until we find him, or he return unto us, as in former Days.

IT were well if all Churches and Possessors now would manifest the same Diligence herein, as did the Church of old in this Example. Many of them, if they are not hardened by the Deceitfulness of Sin, cannot but be sensible that the Lord Christ is variously withdrawn from them, if ever they had experience of the Power of his Presence: Yet are the generality of them far from the frame of heart here described in the *Spouse*; for they are slothful, careless, negligent, and stir not up themselves to enquire after him, or his return unto their Souls. So was it with *Laodicea* of old, so was it with *Sardis*, and so it is to be feared that it is with many at present. But to return.

GENERALLY Christ is *nigh unto Believers*, and of a ready Access; and the principal Actings of the Life of Faith, consists in the frequency of our Thoughts concerning him; for hereby *Christ liveth* in us, as he is said to do, *Gal.* 2. 20. This we cannot do, unless we have frequent thoughts of him, and converse with him. It is often said among Men, that one lives in another; this cannot be but where the Affections of one are so ingaged unto another, that night and day he thinks of him, and is thereby as it were present with him. So ought it to be between Christ and Believers. He dwells in them by Faith; but the Actings of this Life in them (as where-ever Life is, it will be in

act and exerciſe) are proportionable unto their Thoughts of him, and Delight in him.

IF therefore we would *behold the Glory of Chriſt*, the preſent direction is, That on all occaſions, and frequently when there are no occaſions for it by the performance of other Duties, we would abound in thoughts of Him and his Glory. I intend not at preſent fixed and ſtated *Meditations*, which were ſpoken unto before; but ſuch *Thoughts* as are more tranſient, according as our opportunities are. And a great Rebuke it ought to be unto us, when Chriſt hath at any time in a day been long out of our Minds. The Spouſe affirms, That *ere ſhe was aware, her ſoul made her as the Chariots of Amminadab*, Cant. 7. 12. It ſo fell out, that when ſhe had no thoughts, no deſign or purpoſe for attendance or communion with Chriſt, that ſhe was ſurpriſed into a readineſs and willingneſs unto it. So will it be with them that love him in ſincerity. Their own *Souls*, without previous deſigns or outward occaſions, will frequently engage them in holy thoughts of him, which is the moſt eminent character of a truly ſpiritual Chriſtian.

4. THE next Direction is, That all our Thoughts concerning Chriſt and his Glory, ſhould be accompanied with *Admiration, Adoration, and Thanksgiving*. For this is ſuch an Object of our Thoughts and Affections, as in this Life we can never fully comprehend; an Ocean whoſe Depths we cannot look into. If we are ſpiritually renewed, all the Faculties of our Souls are enabled by Grace to exert their reſpective powers towards this glorious Object. This muſt be done in various Duties, by the Exerciſe of various Graces, as they are to be acted by the diſtinct powers of the Faculties of our Minds. This is that which is intended, where we are commanded *to love the Lord with all our ſouls, with all our minds, with all our ſtrength*. All the diſtinct powers of our Souls,

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are to be acted by distinct Graces and Duties, in cleaving unto God by Love. In Heaven, when we are come to our Center, that State of Rest and Blessedness which our Nature is ultimately capable of, nothing but one infinite invariable Object of our Minds and Affections received by *Vision*, can render that State uninterrupted and unchangeable. But whilst we are here, we *know*, or *see but in part*, and we must also act our Faith and Love, on parts of that Glory, which is not at once entirely proposed unto us, and which as yet we cannot comprehend. Wherefore we must act various Graces in great Variety about it; some at one time, some at another, according unto the powers of all our renewed Faculties. Of this sort are those mentioned of *Adoration*, *Admiration*, and *Thanksgiving*; which are those Acts of our Minds wherein all others do issue, when the Object is incomprehensible. For unto them we are enabled by Grace.

ONE end of his illustrious coming unto the Judgment of the last Day is, that he may be *admired in all them that believe*, 2 *Thes.* 1. 11. Even Believers themselves shall be filled with an overwhelming Admiration upon his glorious Appearance. Or if the meaning be, not that he shall be admired *by them*, but admired *in them*, because of the mighty Works of his Grace and Power in their Redemption, Sanctification, Resurrection, and Glory, it is to the same purpose, he *comes to be admired*. And according to the prospect which we have of that Glory, ought our Admiration to be.

AND this *Admiration* will issue in *Adoration* and *Thanksgiving*; whereof we have an eminent Instance and Example in the whole Church of the Redeemed, *Rev.* 5. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *They sang a new Song, saying, Worthy art thou to receive the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast bought us unto God by thy Blood, out of every Tribe, and Tongue, and People, and Nation,*

tion, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and we shall reign upon the Earth. And I saw and heard the Voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and of the living Creatures, and of the Elders, and the Number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud Voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing; and every Creature that is in Heaven, and in the Earth, and under the Earth, and that are in the Sea, and all things in them heard I saying, Blessing, and Honour, and Power, and Glory, be unto him that sits on the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

THE Design of this Discourse is no more, but that when by Faith we have attained a View of the Glory of Christ, in our Contemplations on his Person, we should not pass it over as a Notion of Truth which we assent unto, namely, that he is thus glorious in himself; but endeavor to affect our Hearts with it, as that wherein our own principal Interest doth lie; wherein it will be effectual unto the *Transformation* of our Souls into his Image.

BUT some it may be will say, at least I fear some may truly say, That these things do not belong unto them, they do not find that ever they had any Benefit by them: They hope to be saved as well as others by the Mediation of Christ; but as unto this *beholding of his Glory* by constant Meditation and Actings of Faith therein, they know nothing of it, nor are concerned in it. The Doctrine which they are taught out of the Scripture concerning the Person of Christ, they give their Assent unto; but his Glory they hope they shall see in another World, here they never yet enquired after it.

SO it will be. It is well if these things be not only *neglected*, because the Minds of Men are carnal, and cannot discern spiritual things; but also *despised*, because they have

have an Enmity unto them. It is not for all to walk in these retired Paths. Not for them who are negligent and slothful, whose Minds are earthly and carnal. Nor can they herein sit at the Feet of Christ with *Mary*, when she *chose the better part*, who like *Martha*, are *cumbred about many things* here in this World. Those whose principal Design is to add unto their present Enjoyments (in the midst of the prosecution whereof, they are commonly taken from them, so as that their Thoughts do perish, because not accomplished) will never understand these things. Much less will they do so, whose Work it is to make provision for the Flesh to fulfil it in the Lusts thereof.

THEY must make it their Design to be heavenly minded, who will find a Relish in these things. Those who are Strangers unto holy Meditation in general, will be Strangers unto this Mystery in a peculiar manner.

SOME Men can think of the World, of their Relations, and the manifold Occasions of Life; but as unto the things that are above and within the Vail, they are not concerned in them.

WITH some it is otherwise. They profess their Desire to *behold the Glory of Christ by Faith*; but they find it, as they complain, too high and difficult for them. They are at a Loss in their Minds, and even overwhelmed, when they begin to *view his Glory*. They are like the Disciples, who saw him in his *Transfiguration*; they were filled with Amazement, and knew not what to say, or said they knew not what. And I do acknowledge, that the *Weakness* of our Minds in the comprehension of this Eternal Glory of Christ, and their Instability in Meditations thereon, whence we cannot stedfastly look on it, or behold it, gives us an afflicting abasing Consideration of our present State and Condition. And I shall say no more unto this Case but this alone: When Faith can no longer hold open the Eyes of our Understandings unto the beholding

of the Son of Righteousness shining in his Beauty, nor exercise orderly Thoughts about this incomprehensible Object, it will betake it self unto that holy *Admiration* which we have spoken unto; and therein it will put it self forth in pure Acts of Love and Complacency.

CHAP. IV.

The Glory of Christ in his Susception of the Office of a Mediator.

First in his Condescention.

THE Things whereof we have thus far discoursed, relating immediately unto the Person of Christ in it self, may seem to have somewhat of Difficulty in them, unto such whose Minds are not duly exercised in the Contemplation of Heavenly Things. Unto others they are evident in their own Experience, and instructive unto them that are willing to learn. That which remains will be yet more plain unto the Understanding and Capacity of the meanest Believer. And this is the Glory of Christ in his Office of Mediator, and the Discharge thereof.

IN our *beholding of the Glory of Christ* herein, doth the Exercise of Faith in this Life principally consist; so the Apostle declares it, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Yea doubtless, and I count all things loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*——*To know him, and the Power of his Resurrection, and the Fellowship of his Sufferings, and to be made conformable unto his Death.* This there-

therefore we must treat of somewhat more at large.

THERE is one God, saith the Apostle, and one *Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus.* 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. In that great difference between God and Man occasioned by our Sin and Apostacy from him, which of it self could issue in nothing but the utter Ruine of the whole Race of Mankind, there was none in Heaven or Earth in their Original Nature and Operations, who was meet or able to make up a *Righteous Peace* between them. Yet must this be done by a *Mediator*, or cease for ever.

THIS Mediator could not be God himself absolutely considered; *for a Mediator is not of one, but God is one*; *Gal.* 3. 20. Whatever God might do herein in a way of Sovereign Grace, yet he could not do it in the way of Mediation, which yet was necessary unto his own Glory, as we have at large discoursed elsewhere.

AND as for *Creatures*, there was none in Heaven or Earth that was meet to undertake this Office. *For if one Man sin against another, the Judge shall judge herein*; *but if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?* 1 Sam. 2. 25. *There is not any days-man betwixt us to lay his hand upon us both*, Job 9. 33.

IN this State of Things the Lord Christ as the Son of God said, *Lo I come to do thy Will, O God*; *Sacrifice and burnt offerings thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me, and Lo I come to do thy Will*, Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. By the Assumption of our Nature into Union with himself, in his one Divine Person he became every way meet for the Discharge of this Office, and undertakes it accordingly.

THAT which we enquire after at present, is the Glory of Christ herein, and how we may behold that

Glory. And there are three things wherein we may take a prospect of it.

1. IN his Susception of this Office.
2. In his Discharge of it.
3. In the Event and Consequence thereof or what ensued thereon.

IN the Susception of this Office we may behold the Glory of Christ. (1.) In his *Condescention.* (2.) In his *Love.*

1. WE may behold his Glory in his *Infinite Condescention* to take this Office on him, and our Nature to be his own unto that end. It did not befall him by Lot or Chance; it was not *imposed* on him against his Will; it belonged not unto him by any *Necessity* of Nature or Condition, he stood not in need of it; it was no addition unto him; but of his own Mind and Accord he graciously condescended unto the Susception and Discharge of it.

So the Apostle expresseth it, *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7, 8. *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took on himself the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.*

IT was the *Mind that was in Jesus Christ*, which is proposed unto our Consideration and Imitation. What he was enclined and disposed unto from himself and his *own mind* alone. And that in general which is ascribed unto him is ἐκένωσις *Exinanition* or *Self-emptiness*; *he emptied himself.* This the Ancient Church called his συγκατάβασις, as we do his *Condescention*, an Act of which kind in God is called the *humbling of himself*, *Psal.* 113. 6.

WHEREFORE the Susception of our Nature for the Discharge of the Office of Mediation therein, was an *Infinite*

finite Condescention in the Son of God, wherein he is exceedingly Glorious in the Eyes of Believers.

AND I shall do these three Things. (1.) Shew in general the *Greatness* of this Condescention. (2.) Declare the *Especial Nature* of it. And (3.) Take what view we are able of the *Glory of Christ* therein,

1. SUCH is the transcendent Excellency of the Divine Nature, that it is said of God, that *he dwelleth on high, and humbleth himself to behold the things that are in Heaven, and in the Earth*, Psal. 113. 5, 6. He *condescends* from the Prerogative of his Excellency, to behold, to look upon, to take notice of the most glorious Things in Heaven above, and the greatest Things in the Earth below. All his Respect unto the Creatures, the most glorious of them, is an Act of *Infinite Condescention*. And it is so on Two Accounts.

1. BECAUSE of the *Infinite Distance* that is between his Essence, Nature, or Being, and that of the Creatures. Hence *all Nations before him, are as the Drop of a Bucket, and are counted as the small Dust of the Ballance; yea, that they are as nothing, that they are accounted unto him less than nothing, and vanity*. All Being is essentially in him, and in comparison thereunto, all other things are as *nothing*. And there are no Measures, there is no Proportion between *infinite being* and *nothing*; Nothing that should induce a Regard from the one unto the other. Wherefore the Infinite, Essential Greatness of the Nature of God, with its Infinite Distance, from the Nature of all Creatures thereby, causeth all his Dealings with them to be in the way of *Condescention* or humbling himself. So it is expressed, *Isa.* 57. 15. *Thus saith the high and lofty one who inhabiteth Eternity, I dwell in the high and holy Place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the*

heart of the contrite ones. He is ſo the high and loſty one, and ſo inhabiteth Eternity, or exiſteth in his own Eternal Being, that it is an Act of mere Grace in him, to take notice of things below, and therefore he doth it in an eſpecial manner of thoſe whom the World doth moſt deſpiſe.

2. IT ariſeth from his *Infinite Self-Sufficiency* unto all the Acts and Ends of his own Eternal Bleſſedneſs. What we have a Regard unto, what we reſpect and deſire, it is that it may add unto our Satisfaction. So it is, ſo it muſt be with every Creature; no Creature is ſelf-ſufficient unto its own Bleſſedneſs. The humane Nature of Chriſt himſelf in Heaven is not ſo; it lives in God, and God in it, in a full dependance on God, and in receiving bleſſed and glorious Communications from him. No rational Creature, Angel or Man, can do, think, act any thing, but it is all to add to their Perfection and Satisfaction, they are not *Self-ſufficient.* God alone wants nothing, ſtands in need of nothing, nothing can be added unto him, ſeeing he *giveth unto all Life and Breath, and all things,* Act. 17. 25. The whole Creation in all its Excellency cannot contribute one Mite unto the Satisfaction or Bleſſedneſs of God. He hath it all in Infinite Perfection from himſelf and his own Nature; our Goodneſs extends not unto him; *A Man cannot profit God, as he may profit his Neighbour. If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? and if thy Tranſgreſſions are multiplied, what doſt thou unto him?* (God loſeth nothing of his own Self-ſufficiency and Bleſſedneſs therein, by all this) *and if thou be righteous, what giveſt thou unto him, or what receiveth he at thy hand?* Job 35. 6, 7, 8. And from hence alſo it follows that all Gods concernment in the Creation, is by an Act of Condeſcention.

HOW glorious then is the *Condeſcention* of the Son of God in his *Suſception of the Office of Mediation?* For if ſuch be

be the Perfection of the Divine Nature, and its distance so absolutely Infinite from the whole Creation, and if such be his Self-sufficiency unto his own Eternal Blessedness, as that nothing can be taken from him, nothing added unto him, so that every Regard in him unto any of the Creatures, is an Act of *Self-Humiliation* and *Condescention* from the Prerogative of his Being and State; what Heart can conceive, what Tongue can express the Glory of that *Condescention* in the Son of God, whereby he took our Nature upon him, took it to be his own, in order unto a discharge of the Office of Mediation on our Behalf?

BUT that we may the better behold the Glory of Christ herein, we may briefly consider the *Especial Nature* of this Condescention, and wherein it doth consist.

BUT whereas not only the Denial, but Misapprehensions hereof have pestered the Church of God in all Ages, we must in the first place reject them, and then declare the Truth.

1. THIS *Condescention* of the Son of God did not consist in a *laying aside, or parting with*, or *separation from* the Divine Nature, so as that he should cease to be God, by being Man. The Foundation of it lay in this, that *he was in the form of God, and counted it not robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. 2. *v.* 6. That is, being really and essentially God in his Divine Nature, he professed himself therein to be equal with God or the Person of the Father. He was in the *Form* of *God*, that is, he was God, participant of the Divine Nature, for God hath no *Form* but that of his Essence and Being; and hence he was equal with God, in Authority, Dignity and Power. Because he was in the Form of God, he must be equal with God, for there is *Order* in the Divine Persons, but no *Inequality* in the Divine Being. So the *Jews* understood him, that when

he ſaid, *God was his Father, he made himſelf equal with God.* For in his ſo ſaying, he aſcribed unto himſelf equal Power with the Father, as unto all Divine Operations, *My Father*, ſaith he, *worketh hitherto, and I work*, Joh. 5. 17, 18. And they by whom his Divine Nature is denied, do caſt this *Condeſcention of Chriſt* quite out of our Religion, as that which hath no Reality or Subſtance in it. But we ſhall ſpeak of them afterwards.

BEING in this ſtate, it is ſaid that he *took on him the form of a ſervant, and was found in faſhion as a Man*, ver. 7. This is his Condeſcention. It is not ſaid, that he ceaſed to be in the Form of God; but continuing ſo to be, he *took on him the form of a Servant* in our Nature: He became what he was not, but he ceaſed not to be what he was: ſo he teſtifieth of himſelf, Joh. 3. 13. *No man hath aſcended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, the Son of man which is in heaven.* Although he was then on Earth as the Son of Man; yet he ceaſed not to be God thereby; in his Divine Nature he was then alſo in Heaven.

HE who *is God*, can no more be *not God*, than he who is *not God* can *be God*: And our difference with the *Socinians* herein is, we believe that Chriſt being God, was made *Man* for our Sakes; they ſay, that being only a Man, he was *made a God* for his own ſake.

THIS then is the foundation of the Glory of Chriſt in this Condeſcention, the Life and Soul of all heavenly Truth and Myſteries; namely, that the *Son of God* becoming in *time* to be what he was not, the *Son of Man*; ceaſed not thereby to be what he was, even the *Eternal* Son of God. Wherefore,

2. MUCH leſs did this Condeſcention conſiſt in the *Converſion of the Divine Nature into the Humane*, which was the Imagination of ſome of the *Arians* of old, and we have yet (to my own knowledg) ſome that follow them in the ſame Dotage. They ſay that the *Word which was in*

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the Beginning, by which all things were made, being in it ſelf an Effect of the Divine Will and Power, was in the fulneſs of time *turned into Fleſh*; that is, the *Subſtance* of it was ſo, as the *Water* in the Miracle wrought by our Saviour, was turned into *Wine*; for by an Act of the Divine Power of Chriſt it ceaſed to be *Water* ſubſtantially, and was *Wine* only; not Water mixed with Wine: So theſe Men ſuppoſe a *Subſtantial Change* of the one Nature into the other, of the divine Nature into the humane; like what the Papiſts imagine in their *Traſubſtantiation*: So they ſay God was made Man, his Eſſence being turned into that of a Man.

BUT this no way belongs unto the Condeſcention of Chriſt. We may call it *Ichabod*, it hath *no Glory* in it. It deſtroys both his Natures, and leaves him a Perſon in whom we are not concerned. For according unto this Imagination, that *Divine Nature* wherein he was in the Form of God, did in its own Form ceaſe to be, yea, was utterly deſtroyed, as being *ſubſtantially* changed into the Nature of Man; as the *Water* did ceaſe to be, when it was turned into *Wine*; and that humane Nature which was made thereof, hath no Alliance or Kindred unto us, or our Nature, ſeeing it was not *made of a Woman*, but of the Subſtance of the Word.

3. THERE was not in this *Condeſcention*, the leaſt *Change* or Alteration in the Divine Nature. *Eutiches* and thoſe that followed him of old, conceived that the two Natures of Chriſt, the *Divine and Humane were mixed* and compounded as it were into one: And this could not be without an Alteration in the divine Nature, for it would be made to be eſſentially what it was not; for one Nature hath but one and the ſame Eſſence.

BUT as we ſaid before; altho the Lord Chriſt himſelf in his Perſon was made to be what he was not before, in that our Nature hereby was made to be his, yet his Di-

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vine Nature was not ſo: There is in it neither *variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning.* It abode the ſame in him in all its Eſſential Properties, Actings and Bleſſedneſs, as it was from Eternity. It neither did, acted, nor ſuffered any thing, but what is proper unto the Divine Being: The Lord Chriſt did and ſuffered many things in Life and Death, in his own Perſon, by his Human Nature, wherein the Divine neither did, nor ſuffered any thing at all; although in the doing of them, his Perſon be denominated from that Nature; ſo *God purchaſed his Church with his own Blood*, Act. 20. 28.

4. IT may then be ſaid, what did the Lord Chriſt in this *Condeſcention*, with reſpect unto his Divine Nature? The Apoſtle tells us, that he *humbled himſelf, and made himſelf of no reputation*, Phil. 2. 7, 8. He vailed the Glory of his Divine Nature in ours, and what he did therein, ſo as that there was no outward Appearance or Manifeſtation of it. The World hereon was ſo far from looking on him as the *true God*, that it believed him not to be a *good Man*. Hence they could never bear the leaſt intimation of his Divine Nature, ſuppoſing themſelves ſecured from any ſuch thing, becauſe they looked on him with their Eyes to be a *Man*, as he was indeed, no leſs truly and really than any one of themſelves. Wherefore on that Teſtimony given of himſelf, *Before Abraham was, I am*, which aſſerts a Pre-exiſtence from Eternity in another Nature than what they ſaw, they were filled with Rage, and *took up ſtones to caſt at him*, *John* 8. 58. And they give a Reaſon of their Madneſs, *Joh.* 10. 33. Namely, that *he being a Man, ſhould make himſelf to be God.* This was ſuch a thing, they thought, as could never enter into the Heart of a wiſe and ſober Man, namely, that being ſo, owning himſelf to be ſuch, he ſhould yet ſay of himſelf, that he was *God*: This is that which no *Reaſon* can comprehend, which nothing in Nature can parallel

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or illustrate, that one and the same Person should be both God and Man: and this is the Principal Plea of the *Socinians* at this Day, who through the *Mahumetans* succeed unto the *Jews* in an Opposition unto the Divine Nature of Christ.

BUT all this difficulty is solved by the *Glory of Christ in this Condescention*; for although in himself, or his own Divine Person, he was *over all God blessed for ever*, yet he *humbled himself for the Salvation* of the Church unto the Eternal Glory of God, to take our Nature upon him, and to be made Man: and those who cannot see a Divine Glory in his so doing, do neither know him, nor love him, nor believe in him, nor do any way belong unto him.

SO is it with the Men of these Abominations. Because they cannot behold the *Glory* hereof, they deny the Foundation of our Religion, namely, the Divine Person of Christ. Seeing he would be made *Man*, he shall be esteemed by them *no more* than a Man. So do they reject that Glory of God, his Infinite Wisdom, Goodness and Grace, wherein he is more concerned than in the whole Creation. And they dig up the Root of all Evangelical Truths, which are nothing but Branches from it.

IT is true, and must be confessed, that herein it is that our Lord Jesus Christ is a *stumbling Stone, and a Rock of Offence* unto the World. If we should confess him *only as a Prophet, a Man sent by God*, there would not be much Contest about him, nor Opposition unto him. The *Mahumetans* do all acknowledge it, and the *Jews* would not long deny it; for their Hatred against him was, and is solely because he professed himself to be God, and as such was believed on in the World. And at this day partly through the Infinuation of the *Socinians*, and partly from the Efficacy of their own Blindness and Unbelief, Multitudes are willing to grant him to be a Prophet sent

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of God, who do not, who will not, who cannot believe the Myſtery of this *Condeſcention* in the Suſception of our Nature, nor ſee the Glory of it. But take this away, and all our Religion is taken away with it. Farewel Chriſtianity as unto the Myſtery, the Glory, the Truth, the Efficacy of it; let a refined *Heatheniſm* be eſtabliſhed in its Room. But this is the *Rock* on which the Church is built, againſt which the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail.

4. THIS *Condeſcention* of Chriſt was not by a *Phantaſm* or an Appearance only. One of the firſt Hereſies that peſtered the Church immediately after the Days of the Apoſtles, was this, that all that was done or ſuffered by Chriſt as a Man, were not the Acts, Doings or Sufferings of one that was truly and really a Man, but an outward Repreſentation of things, like the *Appearance of Angels* in the *Shape of Men*, eating and drinking under the Old Teſtament; and ſuitably hereunto ſome in our Days have ſpoken; namely, that there was only an Appearance of Chriſt in the Man *Jeſus* at *Jeruſalem*, in whom he ſuffered no more than in other Believers. But the ancient Chriſtians told thoſe Men the Truth; namely, that *as they had feigned unto themſelves an imaginary Chriſt, ſo they ſhould have an imaginary Salvation only.*

BUT the true Nature of this Divine Condeſcention doth conſiſt in theſe three Things.

1. THAT the *Eternal Perſon of the Son of God, or the Divine Nature in the Perſon of the Son of God, did by an ineffable Act of his Divine Power and Love, aſſume our Nature into an individual Subſiſtence, in or with himſelf; that is, to be his own, even as the Divine Nature is his.* This is the infallible Foundation of Faith even to them who can comprehend very little of theſe Divine Myſteries. They can and do believe that the Son of God did take our Nature to be his *own*, ſo as that whatever was done therein, was done

done by him, as it is with every other Man. Every Man hath human Nature appropriated unto himself by an *Individual Subsistence*; whereby he becomes to be *that man which he is, and not another*; or that Nature which is common unto all, becomes in him to be peculiarly his *own*, as if there were none Partaker of it but himself. *Adam* in his first Creation, when all human Nature was in him alone, was no more that individual Man which he was, than every Man is now the Man that he is, by his *Individual Subsistence*. So the Lord Christ taking that Nature which is common unto all, into a peculiar Subsistence in his own Person, it becometh his, and He *the man Christ Jesus*. This was the *Mind that was in him*.

2. BY reason of this *Assumption of our Nature*, with his doing and suffering therein, whereby he was *found in fashion as a Man*, the Glory of his Divine Person was vailed, and he *made himself of no reputation*. This also belongs unto his *Condescention*, as the first general Effect and Fruit of it. But we have spoken of it before.

3. IT is also to be observed, That in the *Assumption of our Nature to be his own*, He did not change it into a thing Divine and Spiritual; but preserved it entire in all its Essential Properties and Actings. Hence it really did and suffered, was tried, tempted and forsaken as the same Nature in any other Man might do and be. That Nature as it was peculiarly his, and therefore he or his Person therein, was exposed unto all the temporary Evils which the same Nature is subject unto in any other Person.

THIS is a short general View of this *incomprehensible Condescention* of the Son of God, as it is described by the Apostle, *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7, 8. And this is that wherein in an especial manner we are to *behold the Glory of Christ by Faith* whilst we are in this World.

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BUT had we the Tongue of Men and Angels, we were not able in juſt meaſure to expreſs the Glory of this Condeſcention. For it is the moſt ineffable Effect of the *Divine Wiſdom* of the Father and of the *Love of the Son*, the higheſt Evidence of the *Care of God* towards Mankind. What can be equal unto it? What can be like it? It is the Glory of Chriſtian Religion, and the *animating Soul* of all Evangelical Truth. This carryeth the *Myſtery of the Wiſdom of God*, above the Reaſon or Underſtanding of Men and Angels to be the Object of Faith and Admiration only. A Myſtery it is that becomes the Greatneſs of God with his Infinite Diſtance from the whole Creation; which renders it unbecoming him that all his Ways and Works ſhould be comprehenſible by any of his Creatures, *Job* 11. 4, 5, 9. *Rom.* 11. 34, 35, 36.

HE who was eternally in the Form of God, that is, was eſſentially ſo, God by Nature, equally participant of the ſame *Divine Nature* with God the Father: God over *all bleſſed for ever*; who humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in Heaven and Earth: he takes on him the *Nature of Man*, takes it to be his own; whereby he was no leſs *truly* a Man in *time*, than he was truly *God* from *Eternity*: And to encreaſe the Wonder of this Myſtery, becauſe it was neceſſary unto the end he deſigned, he ſo *humbled himſelf* in this Aſſumption of our Nature, as to make himſelf of *no Reputation* in this World; yea, unto that Degree, that he ſaid of himſelf, that he was a *Worm and no Man*, in compariſon of them who were of any Eſteem.

WE *ſpeak* of theſe things in a poor, low, broken manner. We *teach* them as they are revealed in the Scripture. We labour by Faith to adhere unto them as revealed. But when we come into a ſteady, direct View and Conſideration of the *thing it ſelf*, our Minds fail, our Hearts

Hearts tremble, and we can find no reſt, but in an Holy Admiration of what we cannot comprehend. Here we are at a loſs, and know that we ſhall be ſo whilſt we are in this World: But all the ineffable Fruits and Benefits of this Truth are communicated unto them that do believe.

IT is with reference hereunto, that that great Promiſe concerning him is given unto the Church, *Iſa.* 8. 14. *He ſhall be for a Sanctuary* (namely, unto all that believe, as it is expounded, 1 *Pet.* 2. 8.) *but for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence,* even to *them that ſtumble at the Word, being diſobedient, whereunto alſo they were appointed.*

HE is herein a *Sanctuary,* an aſſured Refuge unto all that betake themſelves unto him. What is it that any Man in diſtreſs, who flies thereunto may look for in a *Sanctuary?* A Supply of all his Wants, a Deliverance from all his Fears, a Defence againſt all his Dangers, is propoſed unto him therein. Such is the Lord Chriſt herein unto ſin-diſtreſſed Souls; he is a Refuge unto us in all ſpiritual Diſtreſſes and Diſconſolations, *Heb.* 6. 18. See the Expoſition of the Place. Are we or any of us burdened with a Senſe of Sin? Are we perplexed with Temptations? Are we bowed down under the Oppreſſion of any Spiritual Adverſary? Do we on any of theſe accounts walk in Darkneſs and have no Light? One View of the Glory of Chriſt herein is able to ſupport us and relieve us.

UNTO whom we betake our ſelves for Relief in any caſe, we have regard to nothing but their *Will* and their *Power.* If they have both, we are ſure of Relief. And what ſhall we fear in the *Will* of Chriſt as unto this end? What will he not do for us? He who thus *emptied* and *humbled* himſelf, who ſo infinitely condeſcended from the Prerogative of his Glory in his Being and Self-ſufficiency, in the Suſception of our Nature for the Diſcharge of the Office of a Mediator on our Behalf; will he not relieve

us in all our Diſtreſſes? *Will* he not do all for us we ſtand in need of, that we may be eternally ſaved? *Will* he not be a *Sanctuary* unto us?

NOR have we hereon any Ground to fear his *Power*: For by this infinite Condeſcention to be a ſuffering Man, he loſt nothing of his Power as *God Omnipotent*; nothing of his Infinite Wiſdom or glorious Grace. He could ſtill do, all that he could do as God from Eternity. If there be any thing therefore in a Coaleſcency of *Infinite Power*, with *Infinite Condeſcention*, to conſtitute a *Sanctuary* for diſtreſſed Sinners, it is all in Chriſt Jeſus. And if we ſee him not glorious herein, it is becauſe there is no *Light of Faith* in us.

THIS then *is the Reſt wherewith we may cauſe the weary to reſt, and this is the Refreſhment. Herein is he an hiding place from the Wind, and a Covert from the Tempeſt, as Rivers of Water in a dry place, and as the ſhadow of a great Rock in a weary Land.* Hereon he ſays, *I have ſatiated the weary ſoul, and have refreſhed every ſorrowful ſoul.* Under this Conſideration it is, that in all Evangelical Promiſes and Invitations for coming to him, he is propoſed unto diſtreſſed Sinners as their only *Sanctuary*.

HEREIN he is a *ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence* unto the unbelieving and diſobedient, who *ſtumble at the Word*. They cannot, they will not ſee the Glory of this *Condeſcention*, they neither deſire nor labour ſo to do; yea, they hate it and deſpiſe it. Chriſt in it is a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and a *rock of offence* unto them. Wherefore they chuſe rather utterly to deny his Divine Perſon, than allow that he did thus abaſe himſelf for our Sakes. Rather than they will own this Glory, they will allow him no Glory. A Man they ſay he was, and no more, and this was his Glory. This is that Principle of Darkneſs and Unbelief, which works effectually at this day in the Minds of many. They think it an abſurd thing, as the

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Jews did of old, that he being a man ſhould be God alſo; or on the other hand that the Son of God ſhould thus condeſcend to take our Nature on him. This they can ſee no Glory in, no Relief, no Refuge, no Refreſhment unto their ſouls in any of their Diſtreſſes: Therefore do they deny his Divine Perſon: Here Faith triumphs againſt them, it finds that to be a *Glorious Sanctuary*, which they cannot at all diſcern.

BUT it is not ſo much the Declaration or Vindication of this Glory of Chriſt which I am at preſent engaged in as an Exhortation unto the *practical Contemplation* of it in a way of believing. And I know that among many this is too much neglected; yea, of all the evils which I have ſeen in the Days of my Pilgrimage now drawing to their cloſe, there is none ſo grievous as the Public contempt of the Principal Myſteries of the Goſpel among them that are called Chriſtians. Religion in the Profeſſion of ſome Men is withered in its vital Principles, weakned in its Nerves and Sinews, but thought to be put off with outward Gaiety and Bravery.

BUT my Exhortation is unto diligence in the Contemplation of this *Glory of Chriſt*, and the exerciſe of our Thoughrs about it. Unleſs we are diligent herein it is impoſſible we ſhould be *ſteady* in the principal *Acts of Faith*, or *ready* unto the principal *duties of Obedience*. The Principal Act of Faith reſpects the *Divine Perſon* of Chriſt, as all Chriſtians muſt acknowledge. This we can never ſecure (as hath been declared) if we ſee not his Glory in this *Condeſcention*: And whoever reduceth his Notions unto experience, will find that herein his Faith ſtands or falls. And the Principal Duty of our Obedience, is *ſelf-denial*, with *readineſs for the Croſs*. Hereunto the Conſideration of this Condeſcention of Chriſt is the Principal Evangelical Motive, and that wherein to our Obedience in it is to be reſolved, as the Apoſtle declares, *Phil.* 2.

5, 6, 7. And no Man doth *deny himſelf* in a due manner, who doth it not on the Conſideration of the *ſelf-denial* of the Son of God. But a prevalent Motive this is thereunto. For what are the things wherein we are to deny our ſelves, or forgo what we pretend to have a Right unto? It is in our Goods, our Liberties, our Relations, our Lives. And what are they, any, or all of them, in themſelves, or unto us, conſidering our Condition, and the end for which we were made? Periſhing things, which whether we will or no, within a few days death will give us an everlaſting ſeparation from. Things under the Power of a *Feaver* or an *Aſthma*, &c. As unto our Intereſt in them. But how incomparable with reſpect hereunto is that *Condeſcention* of Chriſt, whereof we have given an Account? If therefore we find an unwillingneſs in us, a Tergiverſation in our minds about theſe things when called unto them in a way of Duty, one view by Faith of the Glory of Chriſt in this Condeſcention, and what he parted from therein, when he made himſelf of no Reputation, will be an Effectual cure of that ſinful Diſtemper.

HEREIN then, I ſay, we may by *Faith* behold the Glory of Chriſt, as we ſhall do it by *Sight* hereafter. If we *ſee no Glory in it*, if we diſcern not that which is matter of Eternal Admiration, we walk in darkneſs. It is the moſt ineffable Effect of Divine Wiſdom and Grace. Where are our Hearts and Minds, if we can ſee no Glory in it? I know in the Contemplation of it, it will quickly overwhelm our *Reaſon*, and bring our Underſtanding into a loſs: But unto this *loſs* do I deſire to be brought every day: For when Faith can no more act it ſelf in *Comprehenſion*, when it finds the Object it is fixed on, too great and glorious to be brought into our Minds and Capacities, it will iſſue (as we ſaid before) in holy *Admiration*, humble *Adoration*, and joyful *Thankſgiving*.

In

In and by its actings in them, doth it fill the ſoul with *Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory.*

CHAP. V.

The Glory of Chriſt in his Love.

IN the Suſception and Diſcharge of the *Mediatory Office by the* Son of God, the Scripture doth moſt eminently repreſent his *Love*, as the ſole impelling and leading cauſe thereof, Gal. 2. 20. 1 Joh. 3. 16. Rev. 1. 5.

HEREIN is he *glorious*, in a way and manner incomprehenſible: For in the Glory of *Divine Love*, the chief *Brightneſs of Glory* doth conſiſt. There is nothing of Dread or Terror accompanying it, nothing but what is *amiable* and infinitely refreſhing. Now that we may take a view of the Glory of Chriſt herein by Faith, the *Nature* of it muſt be enquired into.

1. THE *Eternal Diſpoſing Cauſe* of the whole work wherein the Lord Chriſt was engaged by the Suſception of this Office, for the Redemption and Salvation of the Church, is the *Love of the Father.* Hereunto it is conſtantly aſcribed in the Scripture. And this *Love of the Father* acted it ſelf in his Eternal Decrees, before the foundation of the world, *Eph.* 1. 4. and afterwards in the ſending of his Son to render it effectual, Joh. 3. 16. *Originally*, it is his Eternal Election of a Portion of mankind to be brought unto the enjoyment of himſelf, through the Myſtery of the Blood of Chriſt, and the Sanctification of the Spirit, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 13, 16. 1 *Epheſ.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. 1 *Pet.* 1. 2.

THIS *Eternal Act* of the Will of God the Father, doth not *contain* in it an actual approbation of, and complacency in the ſtate and condition of thoſe that are elected; but only *deſigneth* that for them on the Account whereof, they ſhall be accepted and approved. And it is called his *Love* on ſundry Accounts.

1. BECAUSE it is an act ſuited unto that glorious Excellency of his Nature, wherein he is Love; for *God is Love*, 1 John 4. 8, 9. And the firſt Egreſs of the Divine Properties muſt therefore be in an act of communicative Love. And whereas this Election being an Eternal Act of the Will of God, can have no *moving cauſe* but what is in himſelf, if we could look into all the Treaſures of the Divine Excellencies, we ſhould find none whereunto it could be ſo properly aſcribed, as unto *Love*. Wherefore,

2. IT is ſtiled *Love*, becauſe it was *free* and undeſerved, as unto any thing on our part. For whatever good is done unto any altogether undeſerved, if it be with a deſign of their Profit and Advantage, it is in an *Act of Love*, and can have no other cauſe. So is it with us in reſpect of Eternal Election. There was nothing in us, nothing foreſeen, as that which *from our ſelves* would be in us, that ſhould any way move the Will of God unto this Election: For whatever is good in the beſt of men is an effect of it, Epheſ. 1. 4. Whereas therefore it tends unto our eternal Good, the ſpring of it muſt be *Love*. And,

3. THE *Fruits or Effects* of it are inconceivable Acts of Love. It is by multiplied Acts of Love, that it is made effectual, *John* 3. 16. *Jerem.* 31. 5. *Eph.* 1. 3, 4, 5, 6. 1 *John* 4. 8, 9, 16.

THIS is the Eternal Spring which is derived unto the Church, through the Mediation of Chriſt. Wherefore that which put all the Deſign of this Eternal Love of the

Father

Father into Execution, and wrought out the Accompliſhment of it, was *the Love of the Son*, which we enquire after; and Light may be given unto it in the enſuing Obſervations.

1. THE whole Number or Society of the Elect, were Creatures made in the Image of God, and thereby in a State of *Love* with him. All that they were, had, or hoped for, were effects of Divine Goodneſs and Love. And the Life *of their* Souls was *Love unto God*. And a bleſſed State it was, preparatory for the Eternal *Life of Love* in Heaven.

2. FROM this State they *fell by ſin*, into a ſtate of *Enmity* with God; which is comprehenſive of all Miſeries, Temporal and Eternal.

3. NOTWITHSTANDING this woful *Cataſtrophe* of our firſt ſtate, yet our Nature on many Accounts was recoverable unto the Enjoyment of God, as I have at large elſewhere declared.

4. IN this Condition, the firſt *Act of Love* in Chriſt towards us, was in *Pity* and *Compaſſion*. A Creature made in the Image of God, and fallen into Miſery, yet capable of Recovery, is the proper Object of *Divine Compaſſion*. That which is ſo celebrated in the Scripture, as the *Bowels*, the *Pity*, the *Compaſſion of God*, is the acting of Divine Love towards us, on the conſideration of our Diſtreſs and Miſery. But all Compaſſion ceaſeth towards them whoſe condition is irrecoverable. Wherefore the Lord Chriſt pitied *not the Angels* that fell, becauſe their Nature was not to be relieved. Of this *Compaſſion* in Chriſt, ſee *Heb.* 2. 14, 15, 16. *Iſa.* 63. 9.

5. AS then we lay under the Eye of Chriſt in our *Miſery*, we were the Objects of his *Pity* and *Compaſſion*: But as he looketh on us as *recoverable* out of that ſtate, his *Love* worketh in and by *Delight*. It was an inconceivable *Delight* unto him to take a proſpect of the deliverance

of mankind unto the Glory of God, which is also an act of Love, see this divinely expressed, *Prov.* 8. 30, 31; as that place hath been elsewhere explained.

6. IF it be enquired, whence this *compassion* and *delight* in him should arise, what should be the cause of them; that he who was eternally blessed in his own self-sufficiency should so deeply concern himself in our lost forlorn Condition? I say it did so, merely from the *Infinite Love* and Goodness of his own Nature, without the least procuring inducement from us, or any thing in us, 1 *Pet.* 3. 16.

7. IN this his Readiness, Willingness and Delight, springing from Love and Compassion, the *council* of God concerning the way of our Recovery, is, as it were proposed unto him. Now this was a *way* of great difficulties and perplexities unto himself; that is, unto his Person as it was to be constituted. Unto the Divine Nature nothing is grievous, nothing is difficult: But he was to have *another* Nature, wherein he was to undergo the difficulties of this way and work. It was required of him, that he should *pity us* until he had none left to pity himself when he stood in need of it; that he should pursue his *delight* to save us, until his own *soul was heavy* and sorrowful unto death; that he should relieve us in our *sufferings* by *suffering* the same things that we should have done. But he was not in the least hereby deterred from undertaking this work of Love and Mercy for us: Yea his love rose on this Proposal, like the Waters of a mighty Stream against opposition. For hereon he says, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,* it is my *delight* to do it, *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, 7. *Isa.* 50. 4, 5, 6, 7.

8. BEING thus enclined, disposed, and ready in the Eternal Love of his Divine Person, to undertake the Office of Mediation, and the work of our Redemption; A body *was prepared for* him. In this Body or Human Nature

ture made his *own*, he was to make this Love effectual in all its Inclinations and Actings. It was provided for him unto this end, and filled with all Grace in a way *unmeasurable*, especially with *Fervent Love* unto Mankind. And hereby it became a meet Instrument to actuate his Eternal Love in all the fruits of it.

9. IT is hence evident, that this *Glorious Love of Christ*, doth not consist alone in the *Eternal Actings of his divine Person*, or the Divine Nature in his Person, such indeed is the *Love of the Father* namely, his Eternal Purpose for the communication of Grace and Glory, with his Acquiescency therein; but there is more in the Love of Christ. For when he exercised this Love, he was man also, and not God only. And in none of those Eternal Acts of Love could the Human Nature of Christ have any interest or concern; yet is the Love of the Man Christ Jesus, celebrated in the Scripture.

10. WHEREFORE this Love of Christ which we enquire after, is the *Love of his Person*; that is, which he in his own Person acts in and by his Distinct Natures according unto their Distinct Essential Properties. And the acts of love in these distinct Natures, are infinitely distinct and different; yet are they all acts of *one* and the *same Person*. So then, whether that Act of Love in Christ which we would at any time consider, be an Eternal Act of the *Divine* Nature in the Person of the Son of God; or whether it be an act of the *Human* performed in time by the Gracious Faculties and Powers of that Nature, it is still the *Love of one and the self same Person, Christ Jesus*.

It was an Act of inexpressible Love in him that he *assumed our Nature*, *Heb.* 2. 14, 17. But it was an act in and of his Divine Nature only: For it was antecedent unto the existence of his Human Nature, which could not therefore concur therein. His *laying down his life* for

us, was an act of inconceivable Love, 1 *John* 8. 16. Yet was it only an act of the Human *Nature* wherein he offered himself and died. But both the one and the other were Acts of his *Divine Person*; whence it is said that God laid down his life for us, and purchased the Church with his own Blood.

THIS is that Love of Christ wherein he is glorious, and wherein we are by Faith to behold his Glory. A great part of the Blessedness of the Saints in Heaven, and their Triumph therein, consists in their *beholding of this Glory* of Christ, in their thankful contemplation of the Fruits of it, see *Rev.* 5. 9, 10. *&c.*

THE illustrious *Brightness* wherewith this Glory shines in Heaven, the All satisfying *Sweetness* which the view of it gives unto the Souls of the Saints there Possessed of Glory, are not by us conceivable nor to be expressed. Here this love *passeth knowledge*, there we shall comprehend the Dimensions of it. Yet even here, if we are not slothful and carnal, we may have a refreshing prospect of it; and where Comprehension fails, let Admiration take place.

MY present Business is to exhort others unto the Contemplation of it, though it be but a little, a very little, a small portion of it, that I can conceive; and less than that very little, that I can express. Yet may it be my duty to excite not only my self, but others also unto due Enquiries after it, unto which End I offer the things ensuing.

1. *LABOUR that your minds may continually be fitted and prepared for such Heavenly Contemplations.* If they are carnal and sensual, or filled with earthly things, a due sense of this *Love of Christ* and its Glory, will not abide in them. Vertue and Vice in their highest Degrees are not more *diametrically* opposite and inconsistent in the same mind, than

are

are an habitual Course of sensual worldly Thoughts, and a due Contemplation of the Glory of the Love of Christ: Yea, an earnestness *of Spirit*, pregnant with a multitude of Thoughts about the lawful Occasions of Life, is obstructive of all due Communion with the Lord Jesus Christ herein.

FEW there are whose Minds are *prepared* in a due Manner for this Duty. The Actions and Communications of the most, evidence what is the inward Frame of their Souls. They rove up and down in their Thoughts, which are continually lead by their Affections into the Corners of the Earth. It is in vain to call such Persons unto Contemplations of the Glory of Christ in his Love. An holy Composure of Mind by virtue of spiritual principles, an Inclination to seek after Refreshment in Heavenly Things, and to bath the Soul in the Fountain of them, with constant Apprehensions of the Excellency of this Divine Glory, are required hereunto.

2. BE not satisfied with *General Notions* concerning the Love of Christ, which represent no Glory unto the Mind, wherewith many deceive themselves. All who believe his divine Person, profess a Valuation of his Love, and think them *not Christians* who are otherwise minded: But they have only *General Notions*, and not any distinct Conceptions of it, and really know not what it is. To deliver us from this Snare, peculiar Meditations on its principal Concerns, are required of us. As,

1. *WHOSE Love it is*; namely, of the divine Person of the Son of God. He is expressly called *God*, with respect unto the Exercise of this Love; that we may always consider whose it is, 1 *Joh.* 3. 16. *Hereby we perceive the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us.*

2. BY what *Ways* and *Means* this wonderful *Love* of the Son of God, doth act it self; namely, in the divine Nature, by Eternal Acts of Wisdom, Goodness and Grace

proper thereunto; and in the humane by Temporary Acts of Pity or Compassion, with all the Fruits of them in doing and suffering for us, see *Ephes.* 3. 19. *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. *Rev.* 1. 5.

3. WHAT is the *Freedom* of it as unto any desert on our Part, 1 *Joh.* 4. 10. It was Hatred not Love that we in our selves deserved, which is a Consideration suited to fill the Soul with self-abasement, the best of Frames in the contemplation of the Glory of Christ.

4. WHAT is the *Efficacy* of it in its Fruits and Effects, with sundry other Considerations of the like Nature. By a distinct Prospect and Admiration of these Things, the Soul may walk in this Paradise of God, and gather here and there an Heavenly Flower, conveying unto it a sweet Savour of this Love of Christ. See *Cant.* 11. 2, 3, 4.

MOREOVER, Be not contented to have *right Notions* of the Love of Christ in your Minds, unless you can attain a gracious *Taste* of it in your Hearts; no more than you would be to see a Feast or Banquet richly prepared, and partake of nothing of it unto your Refreshment. It is of that Nature that we may have a *spiritual Censation* of it in our Minds; whence it is compared by the Spouse to *Apples and Flagons of Wine.* We may *taste* that the Lord is gracious. And if we find not a Relish of it in our Hearts, we shall not long retain the Notion of it in our Minds. Christ is the Meat, the Bread, the Food of our Souls. Nothing is in him of an higher spiritual Nourishment than his Love, which we should always desire.

IN this Love is he *Glorious*; for it is such as no Creatures, Angels, or Men could have the least Conceptions of, before its Manifestation by its Effects: And after its Manifestation, it is in this World absolutely incomprehensible.

CHAP. VI.

The Glory of Christ in the Discharge of his Mediatory Office.

AS the Lord Christ was *Glorious* in the *Susception* of his Office: So was he also in its Discharge. An unseen Glory accompanied him in all that he did, in all that he suffered. *Unseen* it was unto the Eyes of the World, but not in his who alone can judge of it. Had Men seen it, they would not have *crucified the Lord of Glory*. Yet to some of them it was made manifest. Hence they testified that in the Discharge of his Office, they *beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, Joh. 1. 14. And that when others could see neither *Form nor Comliness in him that he should be desired*, Psal. 53. 2. and so it is at this day. I shall only make some few Observations; first, on what he did in a *way* of *Obedience*, and then on what he *suffered* in the Discharge of his Office so undertaken by him.

1. *WHAT he did*, what Obedience he yielded unto the Law of God, in the Discharge of his Office (with respect whereunto he said, *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God, yea, thy Law is in my Heart*) it was all *on his own free choice* or Election, and was resolved thereinto alone. It is our Duty to endeavor after *Freedom, Willingness*, and Chearfulness in all our Obedience. Obedience hath its formal Nature from our *Wills*. So much as there is of our *Wills*, in what we do towards God, so much there is of Obedience, and no more. Howbeit, we are *antecedently* unto all Acts of our own Wills obliged unto all that is called Obedience. From the very Constitution of our Natures, we are ne-

ceſſarily ſubject unto the Law of God. All that is left unto us, is a voluntary *Compliance* with unavoidable Commands; with him it was not ſo. An Act of his own Will and Choice *preceded* all Obligation as unto Obedience. He *obeyed becauſe he would*, before *becauſe he ought*. He ſaid, *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God*, before he was obliged to do that Will. By his own Choice, and that in an Act of Infinite Condeſcention and Love, as we have ſhewed, he was *made of a woman*, and thereby *made under the Law*. In his Divine Perſon he was Lord of the Law, above it, no more obnoxious unto its Commands, than its Curſe. Neither was he afterwards in himſelf on his own Account unobnoxious unto its Curſe, merely becauſe he was *Innocent*, but alſo becauſe he was every way above the Law it ſelf, and all its force.

This was the Original Glory of his Obedience. The Wiſdom, the Grace, the Love, the Condeſcention that was in this *Choice*, animated every Act, every Duty of his Obedience rendring it amiable in the ſight of God, and uſeful unto us. So when he went unto *John* to be baptized, he who knew he had no need of it on his own Account, would have declined the Duty of adminiſtring that Ordinance unto him; but he replied, *Suffer it to be ſo now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs*, Mat. 3. 15. This I have undertaken *willingly* of my own accord without any need of it for my ſelf, and therefore will diſcharge it. For him who was *Lord* of all univerſally, thus to ſubmit himſelf to Univerſal Obedience, carrieth along with it an Evidence of Glorious Grace.

2. THIS Obedience as unto the *uſe and end* of it, was not for himſelf, but *for us*. We were obliged unto it, and could not perform it; he was not obliged unto it any otherwiſe but by a free Act of his own Will, and did perform it. God gave him this Honour, that he ſhould obey for the whole Church, that by *his obedience we ſhould be*

be made righteous, Rom. 5. 19. Herein I say did God give him Honour and Glory, that his Obedience should stand in the stead of the perfect Obedience of the Church as unto Justification.

3. HIS Obedience being absolutely *universal*, and absolutely *perfect*, was the great Representative of the Holiness of God in the Law. It was represented glorious when the *Ten Words* were written by the Finger of God in Tables of Stone: It appears yet more eminently in the Spiritual Transcription of it in the Hearts of Believers: But absolutely and perfectly it is exemplified only in the Holiness and Obedience of Christ, which answered it unto the utmost. And this is no small Part of his Glory in Obedience, that the Holiness of God in the Law was therein, and therein alone in that one Instance, as unto human Nature, fully represented.

4. HE wrought out this Obedience against all *Difficulties and Oppressions*. For although he was absolutely free from that Disorder which in us hath invaded our whole Natures, which internally renders all Obedience difficult unto us, and perfect Obedience impossible; yet as unto Opposition from without in *Temptations*, *Sufferings*, *Reproaches*, Contradictions, he met with more than we all. Hence is that glorious Word, *Although he were a Son, yet he learned Obedience by the things which he suffered*, Heb. 5. 8. See our Exposition of that place. But,

5. THE Glory of this Obedience ariseth principally from the Consideration of the *Person*, who thus yielded it unto God. This was no other but the Son of God made Man; God and Man in one Person. He who was in Heaven, above all, Lord of all, at the same time lived in the World in a Condition of no Reputation, and a Course of the strictest Obedience unto the whole Law of God. He unto whom Prayer was made, prayed himself Night and Day. He whom all the Angels of Heaven,

Heaven, and all Creatures worſhiped, was continually converſant in all the Duties of the Worſhip of God. He who was over the Houſe, diligently obſerved the meaneſt Office of the Houſe. He that made all Men, in whoſe Hand they are all as Clay in the Hand of the Potter, obſerved amongſt them the ſtricteſt Rules of *Juſtice*, in giving unto every one his Due, and of *Charity*, in giving good things that were not ſo due. This is that which renders the Obedience of Chriſt in the Diſcharge of his Office, both myſterious and glorious.

2. AGAIN, The Glory of Chriſt is propoſed unto us in what he ſuffered in the Diſcharg of the Office which he had undertaken. There belonged indeed unto his Office, Victory, Succeſs, and Triumph with great Glory, *Iſa.* 63. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. but there were *Sufferings* alſo required of him antecedently thereunto. *Ought not Chriſt to ſuffer, and to enter into his Glory?*

BUT ſuch were theſe *Sufferings of Chriſt*, as that in our Thoughts about them, our Minds quickly recoil in a Senſe of their Inſufficiency to conceive a Right of them: Never any one launched into this Ocean with his Meditations, but he quickly found himſelf unable to fathom the Depths of it: Nor ſhall I here undertake an Enquiry into them. I ſhall only point at this Spring of Glory, and leave it under a Vail.

WE might here look on him as under the *Weight* of the Wrath of God, and the Curſe of the Law; taking on himſelf, and on his whole Soul, the utmoſt of Evil that God had ever threatned to Sin or Sinners; we might look on him in his *Agony* and bloody Sweat, in his ſtrong Cries and Supplications, when he was ſorrowful unto the Death, and *began to be amazed*, in apprehenſions of the things that were coming on him; of that dreadful *Tryal* which he was entring into: we might look upon him, conflicting with all the *Powers of Darkneſs*, the Rage and Mad-

neſs

neſs of Men; ſuffering in his Soul, his Body, his Name, his Reputation, his Goods, his Life; ſome of theſe Sufferings being immediate from God above, others from Devils and wicked Men, acting according to the Determinate Counſel of God: we might look on him *praying*, *weeping*, *crying* out, bleeding, dying, in all things making his Soul an Offering for ſin: So was he taken from Priſon, and Judgment, and who ſhall declare his Generation? for he was cut off from the Land of the Living, for *the Tranſgreſſion* (ſaith God) *of my People was he ſmitten*, *Iſa.* 53. 8. But theſe things I ſhall not inſiſt on in particular, but leave them under ſuch a Vail as may give us a Proſpect into them, ſo far as to fill our Souls with holy Admiration.

LORD! What is Man that thou art thus mindful of him, and the Son of Man that thou viſiteſt him? Who hath known thy Mind, or who hath been thy Councellor? O the depth of the Riches both of the Wiſdom and Knowledg of God! How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways paſt finding out? What ſhall we ſay unto theſe things? that God ſpared not his only Son, but gave him up unto Death, and all the Evils included therein, for ſuch poor loſt Sinners as we were; that for our Sakes the Eternal Son of God ſhould ſubmit himſelf unto all the Evils that our Natures are obnoxious unto, and that our Sins had deſerved, that we might be delivered!

HOW *Glorious* is the Lord Chriſt on this Account in the Eyes of Believers! When *Adam* had ſinned, and thereby eternally, according unto the Sanction of the Law, ruined himſelf and all his Poſterity, he ſtood aſhamed, afraid, trembling, as one ready to periſh for ever under the Diſpleaſure of God. *Death* was that which he had deſerved, and *immediate Death* was that which he looked for. In this State the Lord Chriſt in the Promiſe comes unto him, and ſays, *Poor Creature!* How woful is thy Condi-

tion!

tion! How *deformed* is thy Appearance! What is become of the Beauty, of the Glory of that *Image* of God wherein thou waſt created? How haſt thou taken on thee the monſtrous Shape and Image of Satan! And yet thy preſent Miſery, thy Entrance into Duſt and Darkneſs, is no way to be compared with what is to enſue. Eternal *Diſtreſs* lies at the Door. But yet look up once more, and *behold me*, that thou mayeſt have ſome Glymps of what is in the Deſigns of Infinite Wiſdom, Love and Grace. Come forth from thy vain *Shelter*, thy hiding Place: I will put my ſelf into thy Condition. I will undergo and bear that Burthen of Guilt and Puniſhment, which would ſink thee eternally into the bottom of Hell. I will *pay that which I never took*; and be made *temporally* a Curſe for thee, that thou mayeſt attain unto *Eternal* Bleſſedneſs. To the ſame purpoſe he ſpeaks unto convinced Sinners in the Invitation he gives them to come unto him.

THUS is the Lord Chriſt ſet forth in the *Goſpel evidently crucified before our Eyes*, Gal. 3. 1. Namely, in the Repreſentation that is made of his Glory, in the *Suffering* he underwent for the Diſcharge of the Office he had undertaken. Let us then behold him as poor, deſpiſed, perſecuted, reproached, reviled, *hanged on a Tree*; in all labouring under a Senſe of the *Wrath of God* due unto our Sins. Unto this End are they recorded in the Goſpel, read, preached, and repreſented unto us. But what can we ſee herein? What Glory is in theſe things? Are not theſe the things which all the World of *Jews* and *Gentiles* ſtumbled and took Offence at? Thoſe wherein he was appointed to be a *Stone of ſtumbling*, and a *Rock of offence*? Was it not eſteemed *a fooliſh thing* to look for Help and Deliverance by the Miſeries of another? To look for Life by his Death? The Apoſtle declares at large that ſuch it was eſteemed, 1 *Cor.* 1. So was it in the Wiſdom of the World. But even on the Account of theſe things

is he Honorable, Glorious and Precious in the ſight of them that do believe, 1 *Pet.* 2. 6, 7. For even herein he was the *Wiſdom of God, and the Power of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. And the Apoſtle declares at large the Grounds and Reaſons of the different Thoughts and Apprehenſions of Men concerning the Croſs and Sufferings of Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4, 5, 6.

CHAP. VII.

The Glory of Chriſt in his Exaltation, after the Accompliſhment of the Work of Mediation in this World.

WE may in the next Place behold the Glory of Chriſt with reſpect unto his Office in the Actings of God towards him, which enſued on his Diſcharge of it in this World, in his *own Exaltation.*

THESE are the two Heads, whereunto all the Propheſies and Predictions concerning Jeſus Chriſt under the Old Teſtament are referred, namely, his *Sufferings*, and the *Glory* that enſued thereon, 1 *Pet.* 1. 11. *All the Prophets teſtified beforehand of the Sufferings of Chriſt, and the Glory that ſhould follow.* So when he himſelf *opened the Scriptures* unto his Diſciples, he gave them this as the Sum of the Doctrine contained in them; *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his Glory*, Luk. 24. 26. The ſame is frequently expreſſed elſewhere, *Rom.* 14. 9. *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7, 8.

So much as we know of Christ, his Sufferings and his Glory; so much do we understand of the Scripture, and no more.

THESE are the Two Heads of the Mediation of Christ and his Kingdom; and this is their Order which they communicate unto the Church; *first* Sufferings, and *then* Glory: *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him*, 2 Tim. 2. 12. They do but deceive themselves, who design any other *Method* of these things. Some would *reign* here in this World; and we may say with the Apostle, *would you did reign, that we might reign with you.* But the Members of the mystical Body must be *conformed* unto the Head. In him, Sufferings went before Glory; and so they must in them. The Order in the Kingdom of Satan and the Word, is contrary hereunto. First, the *Good Things* of this Life, and then *Eternal Misery*, is the Method of that Kingdom, *Luk.* 16. 25.

THESE are the two Springs of the Salvation of the Church; the two *anointed ones* that stand before the Lord of the whole Earth; from which all the *golden Oyl* whereby the Church is dedicated unto God and sanctified doth flow. This Glory of Christ in his *Exaltation* which followed on his Sufferings, is that which we now enquire into. And we shall state our Apprehensions of it in the ensuing Observations.

1. THIS is peculiarly *that Glory* which the Lord Christ prays that his Disciples may be where he is, to behold it. It is not solely so, as it is considered absolutely: but it is that, wherein all the other Parts of his Glory are made manifest. It is the Evidence, the Pledge, the Means of the Manifestation of them all. As unto all the Instances of his Glory before insisted on, there was a Vail drawn over them whilst he was in this World. Hence the most saw *nothing* of it, and the best saw it but *obscurely*. But in this Glory that Vail is taken off, whereby the whole Glory of his Person in it self, and in the Work of Mediation is most illustriously manifested.

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When we shall immediately behold this Glory, we shall see him as he is. This is that Glory whereof the Father *made grant* unto him before the Foundation of the World, and wherewith he was actually invested upon his Ascention.

2. BY this Glory of Christ, I do not understand the *Essential Glory* of his Divine Nature; or his being absolutely in his own Person over all *God blessed for ever*: But the manifestation of this Glory in particular, after it had been *vailed* in this World under the *Form of a Servant*, *belongs* hereunto. The Divine Glory of Christ in his Person belongs not unto his Exaltation; but the Manifestation of it doth so. It was not given him by *free Donation*; but the Declaration of it unto the Church of Angels and Men after his Humiliation was so. He left it not whilst he was in this World; but the direct Evidence and Declaration of it he *laid aside*, until he was *declared to be the Son of God with Power*, by the Resurrection from the Dead.

WHEN the Sun is under a total Eclipse, he loseth nothing of his Native Beauty, Light, and Glory. He is still the same that he was from the beginning; a *great Light to rule the Day*. To us he appears as a dark useless *Meteor*: but when he comes by his course to free himself from the *Lunar Interposition* unto his proper Aspect towards us, he manifests again his Native Light and Glory. So was it with the Divine Nature of Christ as we have before declared. He *vailed* the *Glory* of it by the Interposition of the Flesh, or the Assumption of our Nature to be his *own*, with this Addition, that therein he took on him the *Form of a Servant*, of a Person of mean and low Degree. But this temporary *Eclipse* being past and over, it now shines forth in its Infinite Lustre and Beauty, which belongs unto the present *Exaltation* of his Person. And when those who beheld him here as a poor, sorrowful, persecuted Man, dying on the Cross, came to see him

in all the infinite increated Glories of the Divine Nature, manifesting themselves in his Person, it could not but fill their Souls with Transcendent Joy and Admiration. And this is one reason of his *Prayer* for them whilst he was on the Earth, that they *might be where he is to behold his Glory*. For he knew what ineffable Satisfaction it would be unto them for evermore.

3. I do not understand absolutely the *Glorification of the Human Nature of Christ*; That very Soul and Body wherein he lived and died, suffered and rose again, tho that also be included herein. This also were a Subject meet for our Contemplation, especially as it is the *Exemplar* of that Glory which he will bring all those unto, who believe in him. But because at present we look somewhat further, I shall observe only one or two things concerning it.

1. *THAT very Nature it self* which he took on him in this World, is exalted into Glory. Some under a Pretence of great Subtilty and Acuracy do deny that he hath either Flesh or Blood in Heaven, that is, as to the Substance of them; however you may suppose that they are changed, purified, glorified. The great Foundation of the Church, and all Gospel Faith is, that he was *made Flesh*, that he did partake of Flesh and Blood, even as did the Children. That he hath forsaken that *Flesh and Blood* which he was *made* in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin; wherein he lived and died, which he offered unto God in Sacrifice, and wherein he rose from the Dead, is a *Socinian* Fiction. What is the true Nature of the Glorification of the *Humanity* of Christ, neither those who thus surmise, nor we can perfectly comprehend. It doth not yet appear what we our selves shall be, much less is it evident unto us what he is, whom we shall be like. But that he is still in the same *Human Nature*, wherein he was on the earth, that he hath the same rational Soul, and the

same

ſame Body, is a fundamental Article of the Chriſtian Faith.

2. THIS Nature of the Man Chriſt Jeſus, is *filled with all the Divine Graces and Perfections* whereof a limited created Nature is capable. It is not *Deified*, it is not made a God; it doth not in Heaven coaleſce into one Nature with the Divine by a Compoſition of them; It hath not any Eſſential Property of the Deity communicated unto it, ſo as ſubjectively to reſide in it; It is not made *Omniſcient*, *Omnipreſent*, *Omnipotent*: But it is exalted in a Fulneſs of all Divine Perfection ineffably above the Glory of Angels and Men. It is incomprehenſibly nearer God than they all; hath Communications from God, in glorious Light, Love, and Power, ineffably above them all. But it is ſtill a Creature.

FOR the *Subſtance* of this Glory of the Human Nature of Chriſt, Believers ſhall be made Partakers of it; for when we *ſee him as he is*, we ſhall *be like him*: but as unto the Degrees and Meaſures of it, his Glory is above all that we can be made Partakers of: There is one *Glory of the Sun, another of the Moon and Stars, and one Star differeth from another in Glory*, As the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. And if there be a difference in Glory among the *Stars* themſelves as to ſome degrees of the ſame Glory: How much more is there between the Glory of the *Sun*, and that of any *Star* whatever? Such is the difference that is and will be unto Eternity between the Human Nature of Chriſt, and what glorified Believers do attain unto. But yet this is not that properly wherein the Glory of Chriſt in his *Exaltation* after his Humiliation and Death, doth conſiſt. The Things that belong unto it may be reduced unto the enſuing Heads.

1. IT conſiſteth in the *Exaltation* of the Human Nature, as ſubſiſting in the Divine Perſon above the whole Creation of God in Power, Dignity, Authority and Rule,

with all things that the Wiſdom of God hath appointed to render the Glory of it illuſtrious. I have ſo largely inſiſted on the Explication and Confirmation of this Part of the preſent Glory of Chriſt, in the Expoſition of *Heb.* 1. *ver.* 2, 3. that I have nothing more to add thereunto.

2. IT doth ſo in the *Evidence given* of the Infinite *Love of God the Father unto him*, and his delight in him, with the Eternal Approbation of his Diſcharge of the Office committed unto him. Hence he is ſaid *to ſit at the right hand of God*, or at the *right hand of the Majeſty on high*. That the Glory and Dignity of Chriſt in his Exaltation is *ſingular*, the higheſt that can be given to a Creature incomprehenſible; that he is with reſpect unto the Diſcharge of his Office, under the eternal Approbation of God; that as ſo glorioufly exalted, he is proclaimed unto the whole Creation, are all contained in this Expreſſion.

3. HEREUNTO is added the full *Manifeſtation* of his own Divine Wiſdom, Love and Grace in the Work of Mediation and Redemption of the Church. This Glory is abſolutely ſingular and peculiar unto him. Neither *Angels* or *Men* have the leaſt Intereſt in it. Here we ſee it darkly as in a Glaſs; above, it ſhines forth in its brightneſs to the eternal Joy of them who behold him.

THIS is that Glory which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in an eſpecial manner *prayed* that his Diſciples might behold. This is that whereof we ought to endeavor a Proſpect by *Faith*. By *Faith*, I ſay, and not by *Imagination*. Vain and fooliſh Men having general Notions of this *Glory of Chriſt*, knowing nothing of the real Nature of it, have endeavored to repreſent it in *Pictures* and *Images* with all that Luſtre and Beauty with the Art of Painting, with the Ornaments of Gold and Jewels, can give them. This is that Repreſentation of the preſent Glory of Chriſt, which being

being made and propoſed unto the Imagination and carnal Affections of ſuperſtitious Perſons carrieth ſuch a ſhew of Devotion and Veneration in the *Papal* Church. But they err not knowing the Scripture, nor the eternal Glory of the Son of God.

THIS is the ſole Foundation of all our Meditations herein. The Glory that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is in the real actual Poſſeſſion of in Heaven, can be no otherwiſe ſeen or apprehended in this World, but in the *Light of Faith*, fixing it ſelf on Divine Revelation. To behold this Glory of Chriſt is not an Act of *Fancy* or Imagination. It doth not conſiſt in *framing* unto our ſelves the Shape of a glorious Perſon in Heaven. But the ſteady Exerciſe of Faith on the *Revelation* and *Deſcription* made of this Glory of Chriſt in the Scripture, is the Ground, Rule and Meaſure of all Divine Meditations thereon.

HEREON our Duty it is, *to call our ſelves to an Account*, as unto our Endeavor after a gracious View of this Glory of Chriſt: When did we ſtedfaſtly behold it? When had we ſuch a View of it as wherein our Souls have been ſatisfied and refreſhed? It is declared and repreſented unto us as one of the chief Props of our Faith, as an Help of our Joy, as an Object of our Hope, as a Ground of our Conſolation, as our greateſt Encouragement unto Obedience and Suffering. Are our Minds every day converſant with Thoughts hereof? Or do we think our ſelves not much concerned herein? Do we look upon it, as that which is without us and above us, as that which we ſhall have time enough to conſider when we come to Heaven? So is it with many. They care neither *where* Chriſt is, nor *what* he is, ſo that one way or other they may be ſaved by him. They hope, as they pretend, that they ſhall ſee him and his Glory in Heaven, and that they ſuppoſe to be time enough: But in vain do

they pretend a Desire thereof; in vain are their Expectations of any such thing. They who endeavor not to behold the Glory of Christ in this World, as hath been often said, shall never behold him in glory hereafter unto their Satisfaction; nor do they desire so to do. Only they suppose it a part of that *Relief* which they would have when they are gone out of this World. For what should beget such a Desire in them? Nothing can do it, but some View of it here by Faith, which they despise, or totally neglect. Every Pretence of a *Desire of Heaven*, and of the Presence of Christ therein, that doth not arise from, that is not resolved into that Prospect which we have of the Glory of Christ in this World by Faith, is mere *Fancy* and Imagination.

OUR constant Exercise in *Meditation* on this Glory of Christ will fill us with *Joy* on his Account, which is an effectual Motive unto the Duty it self. We are for the most part *Selfish*, and look no farther than our own Concernments. So we may be pardoned and saved by him, we care not much how it is with himself, but only presume it is well enough. We find not any Concernment of our own therein. But this Frame is directly opposite unto the *Genius* of Divine Faith and Love. For their principal Actings consist in preferring Christ above our selves; and our Concerns in him, above all our own. Let this then stir us up unto the Contemplation of this Glory. Who is it that is thus exalted over all? Who is thus encompassed with Glory, Majesty, and Power? Who is it that sits down at the Right Hand of the Majesty on high, all his Enemies being made his Foot-stool? Is it not he, who in this World was poor, despised, persecuted and slain, all for our Sakes? Is it not the same *Jesus* who loved us, and gave himself for us, and washed us in his own Blood? So the Apostle told the *Jews*, that the *same Jesus whom they slew and hanged on a Tree, God had exalted*

with

with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour to give Repentance unto Iſrael, and the forgiveneſs of ſins, Act. 5. 30, 31. If we have any valuation of his Love, if we have any concernment in what he hath done and ſuffered for the Church, we cannot but rejoyce in his preſent State and Glory.

LET the World rage whileſt it pleaſeth; let it ſet it ſelf with all its Power and Craft againſt every thing of Chriſt that is in it; which whatever is by ſome otherwiſe pretended, proceeds from an hatred unto his Perſon: Let Men make themſelves drunk with the blood of his Saints, we have this to oppoſe unto all their attempts, unto our ſupportment, Namely, what he ſays of himſelf; *Fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt, he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive* for *evermore, and have the Keys of Hell and Death*, Rev. 1. 16, 18.

BLESSED Jeſus! We can add nothing to thee nothing to thy Glory; but it is *Joy of heart unto us that thou art what thou art*; that thou art ſo glorioufly exalted at the right hand of God; and do long more fully and clearly to behold that Glory according to thy Prayer and Promiſe.

CHAP. VIII.

Repreſentations of the Glory of Chriſt under the Old Teſtament.

IT is ſaid of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *that beginning at Moſes and all the Prophets, he declared unto his Diſciples in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf*, Luk. 24. 27. It is therefore manifeſt that *Moſes* and the Prophets

and all the Scriptures, do give Teſtimony unto him, and his Glory. This is the line of Life and Light, which runs through the whole Old Teſtament; without the conduct whereof we can underſtand nothing aright therein: And the neglect hereof, is that which makes many as blind in reading the Books of it, as are the *Jews*, the ſame vail being upon their minds. It is *Faith* alone, diſcovering the Glory of Chriſt, that can remove that *vail* of darkneſs which covers the minds of men in reading the *Old Teſtament*, as the Apoſtle declares, 2 *Cor.* 3. 14, 15, 16. I ſhall therefore conſider briefly ſome of thoſe ways and means whereby the glory of Chriſt was repreſented unto Believers under the Old Teſtament.

1. IT was ſo in the Inſtitution of the *Beautiful Worſhip of the Law*, with all the means of it. Herein have they the Advantage above all the ſplendid *Ceremonies* that men can invent, in the outward worſhip of God; they were deſigned and framed in Divine Wiſdom to repreſent the Glory of Chriſt in his Perſon and his Office. This nothing of Human Invention can do, or once pretend unto. Men cannot create *Myſteries*, nor give unto any thing natural in it ſelf, a *Myſtical* ſignification. But ſo it was in the Old Divine Inſtitutions. What were the Tabernacle and Temple? What was the *Holy Place* with the Utenſils of it? What was the Oracle, the Ark, the Cherubims, the Mercy-Seat placed therein? What was the High-Prieſt in all his Veſtments and Adminiſtrations? What were the Sacrifices, and annual ſprinkling of Blood in the moſt Holy Place? What was the moſt whole *Syſteme* of their Religious Worſhip? Were there any thing but Repreſentations of Chriſt in the Glory of his Perſon and his Office? They were a *Shadow*, and the Body repreſented by that ſhadow, was Chriſt. If any would ſee how the Lord Chriſt was in particular foreſignified and repreſented in them, he may peruſe our *Expoſition on*

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the ninth Chapter of the Epiſtle unto the Hebrews, where it is handled ſo at large as that I ſhall not here again inſiſt upon it. The Sum is, *Moſes was faithful in all the Houſe of God, for a Teſtimony of thoſe things which were to be ſpoken afterwards*, Heb. 3. 5. All that *Moſes* did in the erection of the Tabernacle, and the inſtitution of all its ſervices, was but to give an *antecedent Teſtimony* by way of Repreſentation, unto the Things of Chriſt that were *afterwards* to be revealed. And that alſo was the ſubſtance of the Miniſtry of the *Prophets*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 11, 12. The dark apprehenſions of the Glory of Chriſt which by theſe means they obtained, were the life of the Church of Old.

2. IT was repreſented in the *Myſtical Account* which is given us of his Communion with his Church in Love and Grace. As this is intimated in many places of Scripture; ſo there is one *entire Book* deſigned unto its Declaration. This is the *Divine Song of Solomon* who was a Type of Chriſt, and a Penman of the Holy Ghoſt therein. A Gracious Record it is of the Divine Communications of Chriſt in Love and Grace unto his Church, with their returns of love unto him, and delight in him. And then may a man judge himſelf to have ſomewhat profited in the experience of the Myſtery of a bleſſed entercourſe and communion with Chriſt, when the expreſſions of them in that holy *Dialogue*, do give Light and Life unto his mind, and efficaciouſly communicate unto him an experience of their power. But becauſe theſe things are little underſtood by many, the *book* it ſelf is much neglected if not deſpiſed. Yea to ſuch impudence have ſome arrived, in foaming out their own ſhame, as that they have ridiculed the expreſſions of it; but we are foretold of ſuch *mockers* in the laſt days, that ſhould *walk* after *their own ungodly luſts*; they are not of our preſent conſideration.

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THE former Instance of the Representations of the Glory of Christ in their Institutions of *outward Worship* with this Record of the *inward communion* they had with Christ in Grace, Faith, and Love, gives us the Substance of that view which they had of his Glory. What holy strains of Delight and Admiration, what Raptures of Joy, what solemn and divine Complacency, what ardency of Affection, and Diligence in Attendance unto the means of enjoying communion with him, this discovery of the Glory of Christ wrought in the souls of them that did believe, is *Emphatically* expressed in that discourse. A few days, a few hours spent in the frame characterised in it, is a Blessedness excelling all the treasures of the Earth; and if we, whose Revelations of the same Glory do far exceed theirs, should be found to come short of them in Ardency of Affection unto Christ, and continual holy Admiration of his excellencies, we shall one day be judged unworthy to have received them.

3. IT was so represented and made known under the Old Testament in his *personal Appearances* on various occasions unto several Eminent Persons, Leaders of the Church in their Generations. This he did as a *Præludium* to his Incarnation. He was as yet God only; but appeared in the assumed shape of a *man*, to signifie what he would be. He did not *create an Human Nature*, and unite it unto himself for such a Season; only by his Divine Power he acted the Shape of a Man composed of what *Ætherial Substance* he pleased, immediately to be dissolved. So he appeared to *Abraham*, to *Jacob*, to *Moses*, to *Joshua*, and others, as I have at large elsewhere proved and confirmed. And hereon also, because he was the Divine Person who dwelt in, and dealt with the Church, under the Old Testament from first to last, in so doing he constantly assumes unto himself *Human Affections*, to intimate that a season would come when he would immediately

mediately act in that Nature. And indeed after the fall there is nothing ſpoken of God in the Old Teſtament, nothing of his Inſtitutions, nothing of the way and manner of dealing with the Church, but what hath reſpect unto the *future Incarnation* of *Chriſt*. And it had been abſurd to bring in God under perpetual *Anthropopathis*, as grieving, repenting, being angry, well-pleaſed, and the like, were it not but that the Divine Perſon intended, was to take on him the Nature wherein ſuch Affections do dwell.

4. IT was repreſented in *Prophetical Viſions*. So the Apoſtle affirms that the Viſion which *Iſaiah* had of him, was when *he ſaw his Glory*, John. 12. 41. And it was a bleſſed Repreſentation thereof. For his Divine Perſon being exalted on a *Throne of Glory*, his *Train* filled the Temple. The *whole Train* of his Glorious Grace filled the Temple of his body. This is the *true Tabernacle* which God pitched, and not man. The *Temple* which was deſtroy'd and which he raiſed again in three days, wherein dwelt the fulneſs of the Godhead. *Col.* 1. 9. This Glory was now preſented unto the view of *Iſaiah*, Chap. 6. 1, 2, 3. which filled him with Dread and Aſtoniſhment. But from thence he was relieved, by an act of the Miniſtry of that *Glorious* one, taking away his Iniquity by a *coal from the Altar*, which typified the purifying efficacy of his Sacrifice. This was food for the Souls of Believers, in theſe and on the like occaſions, did the whole Church lift up their voice in that Holy Cry, *Make haſt our Beloved, and be thou like to a Roe, or to a young Hart on the Mountain of Spices.*

OF the ſame Nature was his Glorious Appearance on Mount *Sinai* at the giving of the Law, *Exod.* 19. For the deſcription thereof by the *Pſalmiſt*, *Pſal.* 68. 17, 18. is applyed by the Apoſtle unto the *Aſcenſion of Chriſt* after his Reſurrection, *Epheſ.* 4. 8, 9, 10, 11. Only as it

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was then full of outward Terror, becauſe of the giving of the *fiery Law*, it was referred unto by the *Pſalmiſt*, as full of Mercy, with reſpect unto his Accompliſhment of the ſame Law. His *giving* of it was as Death unto them concerned, becauſe of its Holineſs, and the ſeverity of the the Curſe wherewith it was attended; his *fulfilling* of it was *Life*, by the Pardon and Righteouſneſs which iſſued from thence.

5. THE Doctrine of his *Incarnation* whereby he became the Subject of all that Glory which we enquire after, was revealed, although not ſo clearly as by the Goſpel, after the actual accompliſhment of the thing it ſelf. In how many places this is done in the Old Teſtament, I have elſewhere declared; at leaſt I have explained and vindicated many of them (for no man can preſume to know them all) *Vindic. Evangel.* One inſtance therefore ſhall here ſuffice, and this is that of the ſame Prophet *Iſaiah* chap. 9. v. 6, 7. *Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government ſhall be on his ſhoulder, and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace, of the encreaſe of his government and peace there ſhall be no end, upon the Throne of* David *and upon his Kingdom to order it and eſtabliſh it with judgment and Juſtice from henceforth and for ever, the zeal of the Lord of Hoſts will perform this.* This one Teſtimony is ſufficient to confound all *Jews*, *Socinians*, and other Enemies of the Glory of Chriſt. I do acknowledge, that notnotwithſtanding this Declaration of the Glory of Chriſt in his future Incarnation and Rule there remained much darkneſs in the minds of them unto whom it was then made. For although they might and did acquieſce in the truth of the Revelation, yet they could frame to themſelves no notions of the way or manner of its accompliſhment. But now when every word of it is explained, declared, and its Myſtical Sence viſibly laid open unto us

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in the Goſpel, and by the accompliſhment exactly anſwering every expreſſion in it, it is Judicial Blindneſs not to receive it. Nothing but the *Satanical Pride* of the hearts of men which will admit of no effects of Infinite Wiſdom, but what they ſuppoſe they can comprehend, can ſhut their eyes againſt the Light of this Truth.

6. *PROMISES*, *Propheſies*, *Prædictions*, concerning his Perſon, his coming, his Office, his Kingdom and his Glory in them all, with the Wiſdom, Grace and Love of God to the Church in him, are the Line of Life, as was ſaid, which runs through all the Writings of the Old Teſtament, and take up a great portion of them. Thoſe were the things which he expounded unto his Diſciples out of *Moſes and all the Prophets*. Concerning theſe things he appealed to the *Scriptures* againſt all his adverſaries; *Search the Scriptures, for they are they that teſtifie of me.* And if we find them not, if we diſcern them not therein, it is becauſe a vail of Blindneſs is over our minds. Nor can we read, ſtudy, or meditate on the Writings of the Old Teſtament unto any Advantage, unleſs we deſign to find out and behold the Glory of Chriſt declared and repreſented in them. For want hereof they are a *ſealed book* to many unto this day.

7. IT is uſual in the Old Teſtament to ſet out the Glory of Chriſt under *Metaphorical Expreſſions*; yea it aboundeth therein. For ſuch *Alluſions* are exceedingly ſuited to let in a ſenſe into our minds of thoſe things which we cannot diſtinctly comprehend. And there is an Infinite Condeſcention of Divine Wiſdom in their way of Inſtruction, Repreſenting unto us the Power of Things Spiritual, in what we naturally diſcern. Inſtances of this kind in calling the Lord Chriſt by the Names of thoſe Creatures which unto our ſenſes repreſent that Excellency which is ſpiritually in him, are innumerable. So he is called the *Roſe* for the ſweet ſavour of his Love, Grace and Obedience;

dience; the *Lilly* for his gracious Beauty and Amiableneſs; the *Pearl* of Price for his worth, for to them that believe he is precious; the *Vine* for his fruitfulneſs; the *Lion* for his Power, The *Lamb* for his Meekneſs and Fitneſs for Sacrifice, with other things of the like kind almoſt innumerable.

THESE Things have I mentioned, not with any deſign to ſearch into the depth of this Treaſury of thoſe Divine Truths concerning the Glory of Chriſt; but only to give a little Light unto the words of the *Evangeliſt*, that he *opened unto his diſciples out of Moſes and all the Prophets the things which concerned himſelf*; and to ſtir up our own ſouls unto a contemplation of them as contained therein.

CHAP. IX.

The Glory of Chriſt in his intimate Conjunction with the Church.

WHAT concerns the Glory of Chriſt in the *Miſſion of the Holy Ghoſt* unto the Church, with all the Divine truths that are branched from it, I have at large declared in my Diſcourſe concerning the *whole diſpenſation of the Holy Spirit*. Here therefore it muſt have no place amongſt thoſe many other things which offer themſelves unto our contemplation, as part of this Glory, or intimately belonging thereunto. I ſhall inſiſt briefly on *Three* only, which cannot be reduced directly unto the former heads.

AND

AND the first of these is, *That intimate Conjunction that is between Christ and the Church*; whence it is just and equal in the sight of God, according unto the Rules of his Eternal Righteousness, that what he did and suffered in the Discharge of his Office, should be esteemed, reckoned, and imputed unto us, as unto all the fruits and benefits of it, as if we had done and suffered the same things our selves. For this *conjunction* of his with us, was an act of his own Mind and Will, wherein he is ineffably glorious.

THE *Enemies* of the glory of Christ and of his Cross, do take this for granted, That there ought to be such a *conjunction* between the *guilty person* and him that *suffers* for him, as that in him the guilty person may be said in some sense to undergo the punishment himself. But then they affirm on the other hand, That there was *no such conjunction* between Christ and sinners, none at all; but that he was a *man*, as they were men; and otherwise, that he was at the greatest distance from them all, as it is possible for one man to be from another, *Socin. de Servat. lib.* 3. *cap.* 3. The falseness of this latter Assertion, and the gross ignorance of the Scripture under a pretence of *subtilty*, in them that make it, will evidently appear in our ensuing Discourse.

THE Apostle tells us 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. That *in his own self he bare our sins in his own body on the tree*; and chap. 3. 18. That *he suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God.* But this seems somewhat strange unto Reason; where is the Justice, where is the Equity, that the just should suffer for the unjust? Where is Divine Righteousness herein? For it was an act of God, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquites of us all*, Isa. 53. 6. The Equity hereof, with the grounds of it, must be here a little enquired into.

FIRST of all, it is certain that all the Elect, the whole Church of God, fell in *Adam*, under the curſe due to the tranſgreſſion of the Law. It is ſo alſo, that in this curſe, *Death* both *Temporal* and *Eternal* was contained. This curſe none could undergo and be ſaved. Nor was it conſiſtent with the Righteouſneſs, or Holineſs, or Truth of God, that ſin ſhould go unpuniſhed. Wherefore there was a neceſſity upon a ſuppoſition of Gods Decree to ſave his Church, of a *Tranſlation of puniſhment*; namely, from them who had *deſerved* it, and could not bear it, unto one who had *not* deſerved it, but *could bear* it.

A SUPPOSITION of this *Tranſlation of puniſhment* by Divine diſpenſation, is the foundation of Chriſtian Religion, yea of all ſupernatural Revelation contained in the Scripture. This was firſt intimated in the *firſt promiſe*; and afterwards explained and confirmed in all the inſtitutions of the Old Teſtament. For although in the Sacrifices of the Law there was a revival of the greateſt and moſt fundamental principal of the Law of Nature, namely, That *God is to be worſhipped with our beſt*; yet the principal end and uſe of them, was to repreſent this *tranſlation of puniſhment* from the offender unto another, who was to be a Sacrifice in his ſtead.

THE reaſons of the equity hereof, and the unſpeakable glory of Chriſt herein, is what we now enquire into. And I ſhall reduce what ought to be ſpoken hereunto, to the enſuing Heads.

1. IT is not *contrary* unto the nature of Divine Juſtice; it doth not interfere with the principles of natural light in man, that in ſundry caſes *ſome perſons ſhould ſuffer puniſhment for the ſins and offences of others.*

I SHALL at preſent give this Aſſertion no other confirmation, but only that God hath often done ſo, who will, who can do no iniquity.

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SO he affirms that he will do, Exod. 20. 5. *Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children under the third and fourth generation.* It is no exception of weight, that they also are sinners, continuing in their Fathers sins: for the worst of sinners must not be dealt unjustly withal; but they must be so if they are punished for their fathers sins, and it be absolutely unlawful that any one should be punished for the sin of another.

SO the Church affirms; *Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have born their iniquities*, Lam. 5. 11. And so it was: For in the *Babylonish* captivity God punished the sins of their fore-fathers, especially those committed in the days of *Manasses*, 2 King. 23. 26, 27. As afterwards in the final destruction of that Church and Nation, God punished in them the guilt of all *bloody persecutions* from the beginning of the world, *Luke* 11. 50, 51.

SO *Canaan* was cursed for the sin of his Father, *Gen.* 9. 25. *Saul's* seven Sons were put to death for their Fathers bloody Cruelty, 2 *Sam.* 21. 8. 14. For the Sin of *David*, seventy thousand of the People were destroyed by an Angel, concerning whom he said, *It is I that have sinned and done evil, these sheep what have they done?* 2 *Sam.* 24. 15, 17. See also 1 *King.* 21. 29. So was it with all the Children or Infants that perished in the Flood, or in the Conflagration of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. And other instances of the like nature may be assigned.

IT is therefore evident, That there is *no inconsistency with the nature of Divine Justice*, nor the Rules of Reason among Men, that in sundry Cases the Sins of some may be punished on others.

2. IT is to be observed that this Administration of Justice is not promiscuous, that any whatever, may be punished for the sins of any others. There is always a

ſpecial Cauſe and Reaſon of it; and this is a *peculiar conjunction* between them who ſin, and thoſe who are puniſhed for their ſins. And two Things belong unto this Conjunction: (1.) Eſpecial *Relation*. (2.) Eſpecial *mutual Intereſt*.

1. THERE is an eſpecial *Relation* required unto this *Tranſlation of Puniſhment*. Such as that between Parents and Children, as in moſt of the Inſtances before given; or between a King and Subjects, as in the Caſe of *David*. Hereby the Perſons ſinning, and thoſe ſuffering, are conſtituted *one Body*, wherein if one Member offend, another may juſtly ſuffer: The back may anſwer for what the hands takes away.

2. IT conſiſts in *mutual Intereſt*. Thoſe whoſe ſins are puniſhed in others, have ſuch an *Intereſt* in them, as that their being ſo, is a puniſhment unto themſelves. Therefore are ſuch ſinners threatned with the puniſhment and evils that ſhall befall their Poſterity or Children for their ſakes which is highly pœnal unto themſelves, Numb. 14. 33. *Your Children ſhall wander in the wilderneſs forty years, and bear your whoredoms.* The Puniſhment due to their ſins is in part transferred unto their Children, and therein did the ſting of their own Puniſhment alſo conſiſt.

3. THERE is a greater, a more *Intimate Conjunction*, a nearer Relation, an higher mutual Intereſt *between Chriſt and the Church*, than ever was or can be between any other Perſons or Relations in the world, whereon it became juſt and equal in the ſight of God, that he ſhould ſuffer for us, and that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto us, which is farther to be cleared.

THERE neither is nor can be any more than a Threefold Conjunction between diverſe, diſtinct Perſons. The firſt is *Natural*, the ſecond is *Moral*, whereunto I refer that which is *Spiritual* or *Myſtical*; and the Third *Federal*, by vertue of mutual compact. In all theſe ways is Chriſt

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in *Conjunction* with his Church, and in every in one of them, in a way *Singular* and Peculiar.

1. THE firſt Conjunction of diſtinct Perſons is *Natural*. God hath made all Mankind *of one blood*, *Act.* 17. 26. Whereby there is a Cognation and Alliance between them all. Hence every Man, is every Mans Brother or Neighbour, unto whom loving kindneſs is to be ſhewed, *Luk.* 10. 36. And this Conjunction was between Chriſt and the Church; as the Apoſtle declares, Heb. 2. 14. *Foraſmuch as the Children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life time ſubject to bondage.* Hence both *he that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified are all of one*, v. 11. His Infinite Condeſcention in coming into this Communion and Conjunction of Nature with us, was before declared: But it is not common like that between all other Men partakers of the ſame Nature. There are *Two Things* wherein it was peculiar and eminent.

1. THIS *Conjunction* between him and the Church, did not ariſe from a *neceſſity of Nature*, but from a *voluntary* act of his Will. The Conjunction that is between all others is neceſſary. Every Man is every Mans Brother whether he will or no, by being a Man. Natural Generation communicating to every one his ſubſiſtence in the ſame Nature, prevents all acts of their own Will and Choice. With the Lord Chriſt it was otherwiſe as the Text affirms: For ſuch Reaſons as are there expreſſed, he did by an act of his own Will *partake of Fleſh and Blood*, or came into this Conjunction with us. He did it of his own choice, *becauſe the Children did partake of the ſame.* He *would* be what the Children where. Wherefore the *Conjunction* of Chriſt in humane Nature with the Church, is *ineffably* diſtinct from that common Conjunction which

is amongſt all others in the ſame Nature. And therefore altho it ſhould not be meet amongſt meer Men, that one ſhould act and ſuffer in the ſtead of others, becauſe they are all thus related to one another as it were whether they will or no; yet this could not reach the Lord Chriſt, who in a ſtrange and wonderful manner came into this Conjunction by a meer act of his own.

2. HE came into it on this deſign, and for this only end, namely, that *in our Nature taken to be his own*, he might do and ſuffer what was to be done and ſuffered for the Church: So it is added in the Text; *That by death he might deſtroy him who had the power of death*; and *deliver them who for fear of death were ſubject to Bondage*. This was the only end of his Conjunction in Nature with the Church: And this puts the caſe betwixt him and it, at a vaſt diſtance from what is or may be between other Men.

IT is a fooliſh thing to argue, that becauſe a *mere participation of the ſame Nature* among Men, is not ſufficient to warrant the Righteouſneſs of puniſhing one for another; that therefore the conjunction in the ſame Nature betwixt Chriſt and the Church, is not a ſufficient and juſt foundation of his ſuffering for us, and in our Stead! For by *an act of his own will and choice*, he did partake of of our Nature, and that for this very end, that therein he might ſuffer for us, as the Holy Ghoſt expreſly declares. Amongſt *others* there neither is nor can be any thing of this Nature, and ſo no objection from what is equal or inequal amongſt them, can ariſe againſt what is equal between Chriſt and the Church. And herein is he glorious and precious unto them that believe, as we ſhall ſee immediately.

2. THERE is a *Myſtical Conjunction* between Chriſt and the Church, which anſwers all the moſt ſtrict *real or moral Unions & Conjunctions* between other perſons or things. Such is the Conjunction between the head of a body

body and its members, or the tree of the vine and its branches which are *real*; or between an Husband and Wife, which is *moral* and real alſo. That there is ſuch a Conjunction between Chriſt and his Church, the Scripture plentifully declares, as alſo that it is the Foundation of the Equity of his ſuffering in its ſtead. So ſpeaks the Apoſtle, Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. *Husbands love your Wives, even as Chriſt alſo loved the Church* (that is his Wife, the Bride the Lambs Wife) *and gave himſelf for it.* &c. Being the Head and Husband of the Church, which was to be ſanctified and ſaved, and could be ſo no otherwiſe but by his Blood and Sufferings, he was both meet ſo to ſuffer, and it was righteous alſo that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto them for whom he both did it, and ſuffered. Let the adverſaries of the Glory of Chriſt aſſign any one Inſtance of *ſuch a Conjunction*, Union and Relation between any amongſt mankind, as is between Chriſt and the Church, and they may give ſome countenance unto their Cavils againſt his Obedience and Sufferings in our ſtead, with the imputation of what he did and ſuffered unto us. But the Glory of Chriſt is *ſingular* herein, and as ſuch it appears unto them by whom the Myſtery of it is in any meaſure ſpiritually apprehended.

BUT yet it will be ſaid, that this *Myſtical Conjunction* of Chriſt with his Church is *conſequential* unto what he did and ſuffered for it: for it enſues on the converſion of Men unto him. For it is by Faith that we are implanted into him. Until that be actually wrought in us, we have no *Myſtical Conjunction* with him. He is not an *Head*, or an *Husband* unto unregenerate, unſanctified unbelievers whilſt they continue ſo to be: And ſuch was the ſtate of the whole Church when Chriſt ſuffered for us, *Rom.* 5. 8. *Eph.* 2. 5. There was therefore no ſuch *Myſtical Conjunction* between him and the Church, as to render it meet and

equal that he ſhould ſuffer in its ſtead. Wherefore the Church is the *Effect of the Work of the Redemption*, that which roſe out of it, which was made and conſtituted by it; and cannot be ſo the *Object* of it, as that which was to be redeemed by vertue of an antecedent Conjunction with it. I anſwer,

1. ALTHOUGH this *Myſtical Conjunction* is not actually conſummate without an actual Participation of the Spirit of Chriſt, yet the Church of the Elect was deſigned antecedently unto all his ſufferings, to be his Spouſe and Wife, ſo as that he might love her and ſuffer for her; ſo it is ſaid, *Hoſ.* 12. 13. *Iſrael ſerved for a wife, and for a wife he kept ſheep.* Howbeit, ſhe was not his *married wife*, until after he had ſerved for her, and thereby purchaſed her to be his Wife; yet as he ſerved for her, ſhe is called his *Wife*, becauſe of his *Love* unto her, and becauſe ſhe was ſo deſigned to be upon his Service. So was the Church deſigned to be the Spouſe of Chriſt in the Counſel of God, whereon he loved her, and gave himſelf for her.

HENCE in the work of Redemption the Church was the *Object* of it as deſigned to be the Spouſe of Chriſt, and the *Effect* of it, inaſmuch as that thereby it was made meet for the full conſummation of that Alliance; as the Apoſtle expreſly declares, *Eph.* 5. 25, 26, 27.

2. ANTECEDENTLY unto all that the Lord Chriſt did and ſuffered for the Church, there was a ſupreme act of the Will of God the Father, *giving all the Elect unto him*, entruſting them with him, to be redeemed, ſanctified and ſaved; as himſelf declares, Joh. 17. 6, 9. Chap. 10. 14, 15, 16. And on theſe Grounds this Myſtical Conjunction between Chriſt and the Church hath its vertue and efficacy before it be actually conſummate.

3. THERE is a *fœderal Conjunction* between diſtinct Perſons: And as this is various according unto the varie-

ty of the Intereſts and Ends of them that enter into it; ſo that is moſt eminent, where one by the common conſent of all that are concerned, undertakes to be a *Sponſor* or *Surety* for others, to do and anſwer what on their part is required of them for attaining the ends of the Covenant. So did the Lord Chriſt undertake to be *Surety* of the new Covenant in behalf of the Church, *Heb.* 7. 22. and thereon tendred himſelf unto God to do and ſuffer for them, in their ſtead, and on their behalf, whatever was required, that they might be ſanctified and ſaved. Theſe things I have treated of at large elſewhere, as containing a great part of the Myſtery of the Wiſdom of God in the Salvation of the Church. Here therefore I do only obſerve that this is that whereby the *Myſtical Conjunction* that was between Chriſt and the Church, whereon it was *meet juſt* and *equal* in the ſight of God, that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto us, is compleated.

THESE are ſome of the Foundations of that *Myſtery of tranſmitting the ſins of the Church* as unto the guilt and puniſhment of them from the ſinners themſelves unto another every way innocent pure and righteous in himſelf, which is the Life, Soul and Center of all Scripture Revelations. And herein is he exceedingly *Glorious*, and precious unto them that believe. No heart can conceive, no Tongue can expreſs the Glory of Chriſt herein. Now becauſe his Infinite Condeſcenſion and Love herein have been ſpoken to before I ſhall here only inſtance its Greatneſs in ſome of its Effects.

1. IT ſhines forth in the *Exaltation of the Righteouſneſs of God in the forgiveneſs of ſins.* There is no more adequate conception of the Divine Nature, than that of *Juſtice* in Rule and Government. Hereunto it belongs to puniſh ſin according unto its deſert: And herein conſiſted the firſt actings of God as the Governour of the Rational Creation; They did ſo in the Eternal puniſh-

ment of the *Angels* that ſinned, and the caſting of *Adam* out of *Paradiſe*, an Emblem alſo of everlaſting Ruin. Now all the Church, all the Elect of God are ſinners: They were ſo in *Adam*; they have been and are ſo in themſelves. What doth become the Juſtice of God to do thereon? Shall it diſmiſs them all unpuniſhed? Where then is that Juſtice which *ſpared not the Angels* who ſinned nor *Adam* at the firſt? Would this procedure have any conſonancy thereunto, be reconcilable unto it? Wherefore the Eſtabliſhment of the Righteouſneſs of God on the one hand, and the forgiveneſs of ſin on the other, ſeem ſo contradictory, as that many ſtumble and fall at it eternally, ſee *Rom.* 10. 3, 4.

BUT in this interpoſition of Chriſt, in this *Tranſlation* of puniſhment from the Church unto him, by vertue of his Conjunction therewith, there is a bleſſed harmony between the Righteouſneſs of the God, and the forgiveneſs of ſins; the exemplification whereof, is his Eternal Glory. *O Bleſſed Change! O Sweet permutation*; as *Juſtine Martyr* ſpeaks.

BY Vertue of his Union with the Church, which of his own accord he entred into, and his undertaking therein to anſwer for it in the ſight of God, it was a righteous thing with God, to lay the *puniſhment of all our ſins upon him*, ſo as that he might freely and graciouſly pardon them all, to the Honour and Exaltation of his Juſtice, as well as of his Grace and Mercy, *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 26.

HEREIN is he *Glorious* in the ſight of God, Angels and Men. In him there is at the ſame time, in the ſame Divine Actings, a Glorious Reſplendency of *Juſtice and Mercy*; of the one in puniſhing; of the other in pardoning. The appearing inconſiſtency between the Righteouſneſs of God and the Salvation of ſinners, wherewith the Conſciences of convinced Perſons are exerciſed and terrified, and which is the Rock at which moſt of them ſplit them-

themſelves into Eternal Ruin, is herein removed and taken away. In his Croſs were Divine Holineſs and Vindictive Juſtice exerciſed and manifeſted; and through his Triumph Grace and Mercy are exerted to the utmoſt. This is that Glory which raviſheth the Hearts, and ſatiates the Souls of them that believe. For what can they deſire more, what is farther needful unto the Reſt and Compoſure of their Souls, than at one view to behold God eternally well pleaſed in the declaration of his Righteouſneſs, and the exerciſe of his Mercy, in order unto their Salvation? In due apprehenſions hereof, let my Soul live; in the faith hereof let me dye, and let preſent Admiration of this Glory make way for the eternal enjoyment of it in its beauty and fulneſs.

HE is *Glorious* in that the *Law of God* in its *Preceptive part*, or as unto the Obedience which it required, was perfectly fulfilled and accompliſhed. That it ſhould be ſo, was abſolutely neceſſary from the Wiſdom, Holineſs and Righteouſneſs of him, by whom it was given: For what could be more remote from thoſe Divine Perfections, than to give a Law, which never was to be fulfilled in them unto whom it was given; and who were to have the advantages of it? This could not be done by us; But through the Obedience of Chriſt by vertue of this his *Myſtical Conjunction* with the Church, the Law was ſo fulfilled in us by being fulfilled for us, as that the Glory of God in the giving of it, and annexing eternal Rewards unto it, is exceedingly exalted, ſee *Rom.* 8. 3, 4.

THIS is that Glory of Chriſt whereof one view by faith, will ſcatter all the fears, anſwer all the objections, and give relief againſt all the Deſpondencies of poor tempted, doubting ſouls; and an *Anchor* it will be unto all believers, which they may caſt within the Vail, to hold them firm and ſtedfaſt in all Tryals, Storms and Temptations in Life and Death.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The Glory of Chriſt in the Communication of himſelf unto Believers.

ANOTHER inſtance of the Glory of Chriſt which we are to behold here by Faith, and hope that we ſhall do ſo by ſight hereafter, conſiſts in the *Myſterious Communication of himſelf and all the Benefits of his Mediation, unto the ſouls of them that do believe, to their preſent happineſs and future eternal Bleſſedneſs.*

HEREBY he becomes theirs as they are his; which is the Life, the Glory and Conſolation of the Church, *Cant.* 6. 3. *Chap.* 2. 16. *Chap.* 3. 10. He and all that he is being appropriated unto them by vertue of their Myſtical Union; There is, there muſt be ſome Ground, formal Reaſon and Cauſe of this Relation between Chriſt and the Church, whereby *he is theirs*, and *they are his*; he is in them, and they in him; ſo as it is not between him and other Men in the World.

THE Apoſtle ſpeaking of this *Communication* of Chriſt unto the Church, and the Union between them, which doth enſue thereon, affirms that is a *Great Myſtery*; for *I ſpeak*, ſaith he, *concerning Chriſt and the Church*, Epheſ. 5. 32.

I SHALL very briefly enquire into the Cauſes, Ways and Means of this *Myſterious Communication* whereby he is made to be ours, to be in us, to dwell with us, and all the benefits of his Mediation to belong unto us: For, as was ſaid, it is evident that he doth not thus communicate himſelf unto all by a *natural Neceſſity*, as the Sun gives light equally unto the whole World; nor is he *preſent*

withall by an *Ubiquity of his humane Nature*; nor as ſome dream, by a *Diffuſion of his rational Soul* into all; nor doth he become ours by a *carnal eating* of him in the Sacrament; but this *Myſtery* proceeds from, and depends on other Reaſons and Cauſes, as we ſhall briefly declare.

BUT yet before I proceed to declare the way and manner whereby Chriſt communicateth himſelf unto the Church, I muſt premiſe ſomething of *Divine Communications* in General, and their Glory. And I ſhall do this by touching a little on the harmony and Correſpondency that is between the Old Creation and the New.

1. ALL *Being*, *Power*, *Goodneſs*, and Wiſdom were originally, eſſentially, infinitely in God: And in them with the other Perfections of his Nature, conſiſted his Eſſential Glory.

2. THE Old Creation was a *Communication* of Being and Goodneſs by Almighty Power, directed by Infinite Wiſdom, unto all things that were created for the manifeſtation of that Glory. This was the firſt *Communication* of God unto any thing without himſelf, and it was exceeding glorious, ſee *Pſal.* 19. 1. *Rom.* 1. 21. And it was a *curious Machine*, framed in the ſubordination and dependency of one thing on another, without which they could not ſubſiſt, nor have a continuance of their Beings. All Creatures below live on the Earth, and the products of it; the Earth for its whole *production* depends on the Sun and other Heavenly Bodies, as God declares, Hoſ. 2. 21, 22. *I will hear, ſaith the Lord, I will hear the Heavens and they ſhall hear the Earth, and the Earth ſhall hear the Corn, and the Wine, and the Oil, and they ſhall hear Jezreel.* God hath given a ſubordination of things in a Concatenation of Cauſes whereon their Subſiſtence doth depend. Yet,

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4. IN this mutual Dependency on, and Supplies unto one another, they all depend on, and are influenced from God himself, the Eternal Fountain of Being, Power, and Goodness. He *hears the Heavens*; and in the Continuation of this Order by constant Divine Communication of Being, Goodness and Power, unto all Things, God is no less glorified than in the first Creation of them, *Act.* 14. 15, 16, 17. *Chap.* 17. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.

5. THIS Glory of God is *visible* in the Matter of it, and is obvious unto the Reason of Mankind; for from his Works of Creation and Providence they may learn his Eternal Power and Godhead, wherein he is essentially glorious.

6. BUT by this divine Communication God did not intend only to glorifie himself in the essential Properties of his Nature, but his *Existence* also in *Three Persons, of Father, Son and Spirit.* For although the whole Creation in its first framing, and in its Perfection, was and is by an Emanation of Power and Goodness from the Divine Nature in the Person of the Father, as he is the Fountain of the Trinity, whence he is said peculiarly to be the Creator of all things; yet the immediate *Operation* in the Creation was from the *Son*, the Power and Wisdom of the Father, *Joh.* 1. 1, 2, 3. *Col.* 1. 16. *Heb.* 1. 3. And as upon the first Production of the Mass of the Creation, it was under the especial care of the *Spirit of God* to preserve and cherish it, unto the production of all distinct sorts of Creatures, *Gen.* 1. 2. So in the Continuance of the whole there is an especial *Operation of the same Spirit* in all things. Nothing can subsist one Moment by vertue of the Dependance which all things have on one another, without a continual Emanation of Power from him, see *Psal.* 104. 29, 30.

BY these divine *Communications* in the production and preservation of the Creature, doth God manifest his Glo-

ry, and by them alone in the way of Nature he doth ſo; and without them, although he would have been for ever eſſentially glorious, yet was it impoſſible that his Glory ſhould be known unto any but himſelf. Wherefore on theſe divine *Communications* doth depend the whole Manifeſtation of the Glory of God. But this is far more eminent, though not in the outward Effects of it ſo viſible in the new Creation, as we ſhall ſee.

1. ALL *Goodneſs, Grace, Life, Light, Mercy and Power*, which are the Springs and Cauſes of the New Creation, are all originally in God, in the divine Nature, and that infinitely and eſſentially. In them is God eternally or eſſentially glorious, and the whole Deſign of the *New Creation* was to manifeſt his Glory in them by external Communications of them and from them.

2. THE firſt Communication of, and from theſe things, is made unto Chriſt as the *Head of the Church*. For in the firſt place, it pleaſed *God that in him ſhould all the fulneſs of theſe things dwell*, ſo as that the whole *New Creation* might *conſiſt* in him, *Col.* 1. 17, 18, 19. And this was the firſt Egreſs of divine Wiſdom for the Manifeſtation of the Glory of God in theſe holy Properties of his Nature. For,

3. THIS Communication was made unto him as a *Repoſitory* and Treaſury of all that Goodneſs, Grace, Life, Light, Power and Mercy which were neceſſary for the Conſtitution and Preſervation of the New Creation. They were to be laid up in him, to be hid in him, to dwell in him; and from him to be communicated unto the whole Myſtical Body deſigned unto him, that is the Church. And this is the firſt *Emanation* of divine Power and Wiſdom for the Manifeſtation of his Glory in the New Creation. This Conſtitution of Chriſt as the *Head* of it, and the Treaſuring up in him, all that was neceſſary for its Production and Preſervation, wherein the Church is choſen

ſen and preordained in him unto Grace and Glory, is the Spring and Fountain of divine Glory in the Communications that enſue thereon.

4. THIS *Communication* unto Chriſt is (1.) Unto his Perſon; and then (2.) With reſpect unto this Office: It is in the Perſon of Chriſt that *all Fulneſs* doth originally dwell. On the Aſſumption of human Nature into perſonal Union with the Son of God, all Fulneſs dwells in him bodily, *Col.* 2. 9. And thereon receiving the Spirit in all Fulneſs, and not by Meaſure, all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge were *hid* in him, *Col.* 2. 3. and he was filled with the unſearchable *Riches* of Divine Grace, *Epheſ.* 3. 8, 9, 10, 11. And the *Office* of Chriſt is nothing but the way appointed in the Wiſdom of God, for the Communication of the Treaſures of Grace, which were communicated unto his Perſon. This is the end of the whole *Office* of Chriſt in all the parts of it, as he is a *Prieſt*, a *Prophet* and a *King*. They are, I ſay, nothing but the Ways appointed by infinite Wiſdom for the Communication of the Grace laid up in his Perſon unto the Church. The tranſcendent Glory hereof, we have in ſome weak meaſure enquired into.

5. THE Decree of *Election* prepared, if I may ſo ſay, the *Maſs of the New Creation*. In the old Creation, God firſt prepared and created the *Maſs* or Matter of the whole, which afterwards by the Power of the holy Spirit, was formed into all the diſtinct Beings whereof the whole Creation was to conſiſt; and animated according to their diſtinct Kinds.

AND in order unto the Production and Perfecting of the Work of the new Creation, God did from Eternity in the holy purpoſe of his Will *prepare*, and in deſign *ſet apart* unto himſelf, that Portion of Mankind whereof it was to conſiſt. Hereby they were only the *peculiar Matter* that was to be wrought upon by the Holy Ghoſt, and

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the glorious Fabrick of the Church erected out of it. What was ſaid, it may be, of the Natural Body, by the *Pſalmiſt*, is true of the Myſtical Body of Chriſt, which is principally intended, *Pſal.* 139. 15, 16. *My ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth: Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my members were written which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them.* The ſubſtance of the Church whereof it was to be formed, was under the Eye of God, as propoſed in the *Decree of Election*; yet was it as ſuch imperfect. It was not formed or ſhaped into Members of the Myſtical Body. But they were all written in the *Book of Life*. And in purſuance of the Purpoſe of God, there they are by the holy Spirit in the whole courſe and continuance of time in their ſeveral Generations faſhioned into the Shape deſigned for them.

6. THIS therefore is herein, the glorious Order of divine Communications. From the infinite eternal Spring of Wiſdom, Grace, Goodneſs, and Love in the *Father*, all the Effects whereof unto his end were treaſured up in the Perſon and Mediation of the *Son*; the holy Spirit unto whom the actual *Application* of them is committed, communicates *Life*, *Light*, *Power*, *Grace* and *Mercy* unto all that are deſigned parts of the *New Creation*. Hereon doth God glorifie both the eſſential Properties of his Nature, his infinite *Wiſdom*, *Power*, *Goodneſs* and *Grace*, as the only eternal Spring of all theſe things; and alſo his ineffable glorious *Exiſtence* in three Perſons, by the Order of the Communication of theſe things unto the Church, which are originally from his Nature. And herein is the glorious Truth of the *Bleſſed Trinity*, which by ſome is oppoſed, by ſome neglected, by moſt looked on as that which is ſo much above them, as that it doth not belong unto them, made precious unto them that believe, and

becomes the Foundation of their Faith and Hope. In a View of the glorious Order of thoſe divine Communications, we are in a ſteady Contemplation of the ineffable Glory of the Exiſtence of the Nature of God in the Three diſtinct Perſons of Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt.

7. ACCORDING unto this *Divine Order* the Elect in all Ages are by the holy Spirit moving and acting on that *Maſs of the New Creation*, formed and animated with ſpiritual Life, Light, Grace and Power unto the Glory of God. They are not called accidentally according unto the external Occaſions and Cauſes of their Converſion unto God; but in every Age, at his own Time and Seaſon, the holy Spirit communicates theſe things unto them, in the Order declared unto the Glory of God.

8. AND in the ſame manner is the whole *New Creation* preſerved every Day: every *moment* there is vital Power and Strength, Mercy and Grace communicated in this Divine Order to all Believers in the World. There is a continual Influence from the *Fountain*, from the Head, into all the Members, whereby they all *conſiſt* in him, are acted by him, who worketh in us *both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure*: and the Apoſtle declares that the whole Conſtitution of *Church-order* is ſuited as an external Inſtrument to promote theſe Divine Communications, unto all the Members of the Church, it ſelf *Eph.* 4. 13, 14, 15, 16.

THIS in general is the *Order of Divine Communications*, which is for the Subſtance of it continued in Heaven, and ſhall be ſo unto Eternity; For God is, and ever will be *all and in all*. But at preſent, it is inviſible unto Eyes of Fleſh, yea, the Reaſon of Men. Hence it is by the moſt deſpiſed, they ſee no Glory in it: But let us conſider the Prayer of the Apoſtle, that it may be otherwiſe with us, *Epheſ.* 1. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. For the Revelation made of the Glory of God in the old Creation,

on, is exceeding inferior to that which he makes of himself in the New.

HAVING premised these things in general concerning the *Glory of Divine Communications*, I shall proceed to declare in particular, the Grounds and Way whereby the Lord Christ *communicates himself*, and therewithal all the Benefits of his Mediation, unto them that do believe, as it was before proposed.

WE on our part are said herein to *receive him*, and that by Faith, *John* 1. 11, 12. Now where he is received by us, he must be tendred, given, granted, or communicated unto us. And this he is by some divine Acts of the Father, and some of his own.

THE Foundation of the whole is laid in a Soveraign Act of the Will, the Pleasure, the Grace of the *Father*. And this is the Order and Method of all divine Operations in the Way and Work of Grace. They originally proceed all from him; and having effected their Ends, do return, rest, and center in him again, see *Ephes.* 1. 4, 5, 6. Wherefore that Christ is made ours, that he is communicated unto us, is originally from the free Act, Grant and Donation of the Father, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *Rom.* 5. 15, 16, 17. And hereunto sundry things do concur. As (1.) His *Eternal Purpose* which he purposed in himself to glorifie his Grace in all his Elect, by this Communication of Christ, and the Benefits of his Mediation unto them, which the Apostle declares at large, *Ephes.* 1. (2.) His *granting all the Elect unto Christ* to be his own: so to do and suffer for them what was antecedaneously necessary unto the actual Communication of himself unto them. *Thine they were, and thou gavest them to me*, Joh. 17. (3.) The giving of the *Promise*, or the Constitution of the Rule and Law of the Gospel, whereby a participation of Christ, an Interest in him and all that he is, is made over and assured unto Believers, *Joh.* 1. 12. 1 *Joh.* 1. 1, 2, 3, 4.

(4.) An Act of *Almighty Power*, working and creating Faith in the Souls of the Elect, enabling them to receive Chriſt ſo exhibited and communicated unto them by the Goſpel, *Epheſ.* 1. 19, 20. *Chap.* 2. 5, 6, 7, 8.

THESE things which I have but named, have an Influence into the Glory of Chriſt herein: For this *Communication* of him unto the Church, is an effect of the eternal Counſel, Wiſdom, Grace and Power of the Father.

BUT they are the *Acts of Chriſt himſelf* herein, which principally we enquire into, as thoſe which manifeſt the Glory of his Wiſdom, Love and Condeſcention.

AND 1. He gives and communicates unto them his *holy Spirit*; the holy Spirit as peculiarly his, as granted unto him of the Father, as inhabiting in him in all fulneſs. This Spirit abiding *originally* as to his Perſon, and *immeaſurably* as unto his Effects and Operations in himſelf, he gives unto all Believers to *inhabit and abide* in them alſo, *Joh.* 14. 14. 20. 1 *Cor.* 6. 16, 17. *Rom.* 8. 8. Hence follows an *ineffable Union* between him and them. For as in his Incarnation he took our *Nature* into perſonal Union with his own; ſo herein he takes our *Perſons* into a *Myſtical Union* with himſelf. Hereby he becomes ours, and we are his.

AND herein is he *unſpeakably glorious*. For this Myſtery of the *Inhabitation* of the ſame Spirit in him as the Head, and the Church as his Body, animating the whole, is a tranſcendent Effect of Divine Wiſdom. There is nothing of this Nature in the whole Creation beſides; no ſuch Union, no ſuch mutual Communication. The ſtricteſt Unions and Relations in Nature are but Shadows of it. *Epheſ.* 5. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. Herein alſo is the Lord Chriſt *precious* unto them that do believe, but a *Stone of ſtumbling*, and a Rock of offence unto the Diſobedient. This glorious ineffable Effect of his

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Wisdom and Grace, this rare, peculiar, singular Way of the Communication of himself unto the Church, is by many despised. They know, it may be, some of them, what it is to be joyned *unto an Harlot* so as to become one Flesh, but what it is to be joyned *unto the Lord* so as to become one Spirit, they know not. But this Principle and Spring of the spiritual Life of the Church, and of all vital spiritual Motions towards God, and Things heavenly, wherein, and whereby our *Life is hid with Christ in God*, is the Glory, the Exaltation, the Honor, the Security of the Church unto the Praise of the Grace of God. The Understanding of it in its Causes, Effects, Operations and Priviledges wherewith it is accompanied, is to be preferred above all the Wisdom in, and of the World.

2. HE thus communicates himself unto us, by the *Formation of a new Nature*, his own Nature in us; so as that the very same spiritual Nature is in him, and in the Church. Only it is so with this difference, that in him it is in the absolute perfection of all those glorious Graces wherein it doth consist; in the Church it is in various *Measures* and *Degrees*, according as he is pleased to communicate it. But the *same Divine Nature* it is, that is in him and us; for through the precious Promises of the Gospel, we are made *Partakers of his Divine Nature*. It is not enough for us, that he hath taken our Nature to be his, unless he gives us also his Nature to be ours; that is implants in our Souls all those gracious Qualifications, as unto the Essence and Substance of them, wherewith he himself in his human Nature is endued. This is that *new Man*, that *new Creature*, that *Divine Nature*, that *Spirit* which is born of the Spirit, that *Transformation* into the Image of Christ, that *putting of* him on, that Workmanship of God, whereunto in him we are created, that the Scripture so fully testifieth unto, *Joh.* 3. 6. *Rom.* 6 3, 4,

5, 6, 7, 8. 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. *Chap.* 5. 17. *Ephes.* 4. 20. 24. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4.

AND that new *Heavenly Nature* which is thus formed in Believers, as the first vital Act of that Union which is between Christ and them by the Inhabitation of the same Spirit, is peculiarly *his* Nature. For both is it so as it is in *him* the *Idæa* and the Exemplar of it in us, inasmuch as we are predestinated to be conformed unto his Image; and as it is wrought or produced in our Souls by an Emanation of Power, Vertue, and Efficiency from him.

THIS is a most heavenly Way of the Communication of himself unto us, wherein of *God he is made unto us Wisdom and Sanctification.* Hereon he says of his Church, *This now is Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh*; I see my self, my own Nature in them, whence they are comely and desirable. Hereby he makes way to present it to himself a *glorious Church*, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without Blemish. On this Communication of Christ unto us by the forming *of his own Nature* in us, depends all the Purity, the Beauty, the Holiness, the inward Glory of the Church. Hereby is it really, substantially internally separated from the World, and distinguished from all others, who in the outward forms of things, in the Profession and Duties of Religion seem to be the same with them. Hereby it becomes the *First Fruits of the Creation unto God*, bearing forth the Renovation of his Image in the World: Herein the Lord Christ is, and will be *glorious* unto all Eternity. I only mention these things, which deserve to be far more largely insisted on.

3. HE doth the same by that *actual Insitition or Implantation into himself*, which he gives us by Faith; which is of his own Operation. For hereon two Things do ensue; one by the Grace or Power, the other by the Law

or

or Constitution of the Gospel, which have a great Influence into this *Mystical Communication* of Christ unto the Church.

AND the first of these is, that thereby there is communicated unto us, and we do derive *Supplies of spiritual Life*, Sustentation, Motion, Strength in Grace, and Perseverance from him continually. This is that which himself so divinely teacheth in the *Parable of the Vine* and its Branches, *Joh.* 15. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Hereby is there a continual Communication from his *All fulness of Grace* unto the whole Church, and all the Members of it, unto all the Ends and Duties of spiritual Life. *They live, nevertheless not they*, but *Christ liveth in them*; *and the Life which they lead* in the *Flesh*, *is by the Faith of the Son of God.* And the other, by vertue of the *Law* and *Constitution* of the Gospel, is, that hereon his *Righteousness*, and all the Fruits of his Mediation, are imputed unto us; the Glory of which Mystery the Apostle unfolds, *Rom.* 3. 4, 5.

I MIGHT add hereunto the *mutual Inbeing* that is between him and Believers by *Love*; for the way of the Communication of his Love unto them, being by the *shedding of it abroad in their Hearts by the Holy Ghost*, and their returns of Love unto them being wrought in them by an *Almighty Efficiency of the same Spirit*, there is that which is deeply mysterious and glorious in it. I might mention also the *Continuation of his Discharge* of all his Offices towards us, whereon all our Receptions from him, or all the Benefits of his Mediation, whereof we are made Partakers, do depend. But the few Instances that have been given of the Glory of Christ in this *Mysterious Communication of himself unto his Church*, may suffice to give us such a View of it, as to fill our Hearts with holy Admiration and Thanksgiving.

CHAP. XI.

The Glory of Chriſt in the Recapitulation of all things in him.

IN the laſt Place the Lord Chriſt is peculiarly and eminently glorious in the Re-capitulation *of all things in him*, after they had been ſcattered and diſordered by ſin. This the Apoſtle propoſeth as the moſt ſignal Effect of Divine Wiſdom, and the ſoveraign Pleaſure of God.

HE hath abounded towards us in all Wiſdom and Prudence; having made known unto us the Myſtery of his Will according unto his good Pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf. That in the Diſpenſation of the fulneſs of time, he might gather together in one all things in Chriſt, both which are in the Heavens, and which are on Earth, even in him, Epheſ. 1. 8, 9, 10.

FOR the Diſcovery of the Mind of the Holy Ghoſt in theſe Words, ſo far as I am at preſent concerned, namely, as unto the *Repreſentation of the Glory of Chriſt in them*, ſundry brief Obſervations muſt be premiſed; and in them it will be neceſſary that we briefly declare the Original of all theſe things in Heaven and Earth, their Primitive Order, the Confuſion that enſued thereon, with their Reſtitution in Chriſt, and his Glory thereby.

GOD alone hath all being in him. Hence he gives himſelf that Name, I AM, *Exod.* 3. 14. He was eternally *All*; when all things elſe that ever were, or now are, or ſhall be, were nothing. And when they are, they are no otherwiſe, but as *they are of him, and from him, and to him*, Rom. 11. 36. Moreover his *Being* and *Goodneſs* are the

ſame.

ſame. The *Goodneſs* of Good is the Meetneſs of the *Divine Being* to be communicative of it ſelf in its Effects. Hence this is the firſt Notion of the *Divine Nature, Infinite Being and Goodneſs in a Nature intelligent and ſelf-ſubſiſtent.* So the Apoſtle declares it, *He that cometh unto God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder*, Heb. 11. 6.

2. IN this State of *Infinite, Eternal Being and Goodneſs* antecedent unto any Act of Wiſdom or Power without himſelf, to give Exiſtence unto other Things, God was, and is eternally in himſelf all that he will be, all that he can be, unto Eternity. For where there is Infinite Being and Infinite Goodneſs, there is Infinite Bleſſedneſs and Happineſs, whereunto nothing can be added. God is always the ſame. That is his Name אתה הוא *Pſal.* 102. 27. *Thou art he*, always the ſame. All things that are, make no addition unto God, no change in his State. His Bleſſedneſs, Happineſs, Self-ſatisfaction, as well as all other his Infinite Perfections, were abſolutely the ſame before the Creation of any thing, whilſt there was nothing but himſelf, as they are ſince he hath made all things: For the Bleſſedneſs of God conſiſts in the *ineffable mutual Inbeing* of the Three holy Perſons in the ſame Nature, with the immanent reciprocal Actings of the Father and the Son in the eternal Love and Complacency of the Spirit. Hereunto nothing can be added, herein no Change can be made by any external Work or Effect of Power. Herein doth God act in the perfect Knowledge, and perfect Love of his own Perfections unto an infinite Acquieſcency therein, which is the Divine Bleſſedneſs. This gives us the true Notion of the Divine Nature antecedent unto the Manifeſtation of it made by any outward Effects. Infinite Being and Goodneſs eternally bleſſed in the Knowledge and Enjoyment of it ſelf by inconceivable, ineffable, internal Actings anſwering the manner of its Subſiſtence, which is in three diſtinct Perſons.

3. THIS *Being and Goodness* of God by his own Will and Pleasure, acting themselves in Infinite Wisdom and Power, produced the Creation of all things. Herein he communicated a finite, limited, dependent Being and Goodness unto other things without himself. For all Being and Goodness being, as was said, in him alone, it was necessary that the first outward Work and Effect of the Divine Nature must be the Communication of Being and Goodness into other things. Wherefore as when he had given unto every thing its *Being* out of nothing by the Word of his Power, saying, *Let them be, and they were*; so it is said, that he looked on all that he had made, and behold, *they were exceeding good*, Gen. 1. last. Being and Goodness must be the first outward Effects of the Divine Nature, which being wrought by Infinite Power and Wisdom, do represent unto us the Glory of God in the Creation of all things. Infinite Being in Self-subsistence, which is necessary in the first Cause and Spring of all things; Infinite Goodness to communicate the Effect of this Being unto that which was not, and Infinite Wisdom and Power in that Communication, are gloriously manifested therein.

4. IN this State, all things that were made, depended *immediately* on God himself, without the Interposition of any other Head of Influence or Rule. They had the Continuance of their Being and its Preservation, from the immediate Actings of these Properties of the Divine Nature whereby they were made; and their Dependance on God was by Vertue of that Law, which was implanted on the Principles and Powers of their several Natures by God himself.

5. THUS *in the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.* He provided himself of *two distinct Rational Families*, that should depend on him according to a Law of Moral Obedience, and thereby give Glory to him; with

with two distinct Habitations for them cognate unto their Nature and Use; Heaven above, and the Earth beneath. The Earth he appointed for the Habitation of Man, which was every way suited unto the Constitution of his Nature, the Preservation of his Being, and the End of his Creation in giving Glory to God. Heaven he prepared for the Habitation of the Angels, which was suited unto the Constitution of their Nature, the Preservation of their Being, and the End of their Creation in giving Glory to God. Wherefore as *Man* had Power and Dominion over all things here below, and was to use them all unto the Glory of God, by which means God received Glory from them also, though in themselves bruit and inanimate; so the *Angels* had the like Dominion over the Coelestial and Ætherial Bodies, wherewith God had fitted the Place of their Habitation, that through the Contemplation and Use of them, God might have a Revenue of Glory and Praise from them also. To suppose any other Race of *Intellectual Creatures*, besides Angels in Heaven, and Men on Earth, is not only without all Countenance from any Divine Testimony, but it disturbs and disorders the whole Representation of the Glory of God made unto us in the Scripture, and the whole Design of his Wisdom and Grace as declared therein. *Intellectual Creatures* not comprehended in that Government of God, and Mystery of his Wisdom in Christ, which the Scripture Reveals, are a *Chimera* framed in the Imaginations of some Men, scarce duly sensible of what it is to be *wise unto Sobriety*.

6. THIS Order of things was *beautiful* and comely. Hence were they all said to be *exceeding good*. For each of these Families had their *own immediate, distinct Dependance* on God. He was the immediate Head of them. There was no other common Head interposed between God and them. They were not an Head unto one ano-

ther. There were no Communications unto them, but what were immediate from God himself. And their Union among themselves was in this alone, that all their Obedience did meet and center in God. So God made the Heavens and the Earth, and two distinct Families in them for himself.

7. THIS beautiful Order in it self, this Union between the two Families of God, was disturbed, broken, dissolved by the Entrance of Sin: For hereby part of the Family above, and the whole Family below, fell off from their Dependance on God, and ceasing to center in him as their Head, they fell into Variance and Enmity among themselves. For the Center of this Union and Order being removed and lost, nothing but Enmity and Confusion remained among them. Hereon to shew that its Goodness was lost, God cursed the Earth and all that was in it; for it was put in Subjection unto Man, who was now fallen from him: Howbeit he cursed not the Heavens which were in Subjection unto the Angels, because some of them only left their Habitation; and the Habitation of the Residue was not to be cursed for their Sakes. But Mankind was wholly gone off from God.

8. THE Angels that sinned, God utterly rejected for ever as an Example of his Severity; the whole Race of Mankind he would not utterly cast off, but determined to recover and save a Remnant according to the Election of Grace; which how he did it in a way of Condecency unto all his Divine Perfections, I have elsewhere declared.

9. HOWBEIT he would not restore them into their former State, so as to have again two distinct Families, each in an immediate Dependance on himself, though he left them in different and distinct Habitations, *Eph.* 3. 15. But he would gather them both into one, and that under a new Head, in whom the one Part should be pre-

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ſerved from ſinning, and the other delivered from ſin committed.

10. THIS then is that which the Apoſtle declares in theſe Words, *To gather together in one all things which are in Heaven, and which are in Earth; even in him.* And ſo he again expreſſeth it, *Col.* 1. 20. *To reconcile all things unto himſelf in him, whether they are things in Heaven, or things in Earth, all things were* fallen into diſorder and confuſion by ſin; they were fallen off from God into variance among themſelves. God would not reſtore them into their firſt Order in an immediate Dependance on his Divine Perfections. He would no longer keep them in two diſtinct Families; but he would in his infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs gather them up into *one common Head*, on whom they ſhould have their immediate Dependance, and be reconciled again among themſelves.

11. THIS *New Head*, wherein God hath gathered up all things in Heaven and Earth into one; one Body, one Family, on whom is all their dependance, in whom they all now conſiſt, is *Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God incarnate*, ſee 1 *Cor.* 11. 3. *Eph.* 1. 21, 22, 23. This Glory was reſerved for him; none other could be meet for it, or worthy of it, ſee *Col.* 1. 17, 18, 19, 20

12. TO anſwer all the Ends of this *New Head* of Gods *recollected Family*, all Power in Heaven and Earth, all Fulneſs of Grace and Glory, is committed unto him. There is no Communication from God, no Act of Rule towards this Family, no Supply of Vertue, Power, Grace or Goodneſs unto Angels or Men, but what is immediately from this *New Head*, whereinto they are gathered. In him they all conſiſt, on him do they depend, unto him are they ſubject; in their Relation unto him doth their Peace, Union and Agreement among themſelves conſiſt. This is the *Recapitulation of all things* intended by the Apoſtle.

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13. IT is true, that he acts distinctly and variously towards the two parts of the *Recollected Family* of Angels and Men, according as their different States and Conditions do require. For (1.) We had need of a Reparation by Redemption and Grace, which the Angels had not. (2.) Angels were capable of immediate Confirmation in Glory, which we are not, until we come to Heaven. Therefore (1.) He assumed our Nature that it might be repaired; which he did not the Nature of the Angels. (2.) He gives us Union unto himself, by his Spirit, which exalts us into a Dignity and Honour, meet for Fellowship with them in the same Family.

THIS is a brief Account of the mysterious Work of Divine Wisdom in the *Recapitulation* of all things in Jesus Christ; and herein is he transcendently glorious; or his Glory herein is far above our Comprehension: Yet some few things may be observed to direct us in the View and Contemplation of it. As,

1. HE alone was a *meet and capable Subject of it*. He only could bear the weight of this Glory. No meer Creature in Heaven or Earth was meet to be thus made the Head of the whole new Creation of God. In none of them could all things consist. None of them was meet to be thus in the Place of God, to have all things depend upon him, and be put in subjection unto him, so as that there should be no Communication between God and the Creation, but by and through him alone. Wherefore when the holy Ghost assigns this Glory unto him, he so describes him, as that we may discern his singular meetness for it; as that he is the *Brightness of the Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person, upholding all things by the Word of his Power*, Heb. 1. 3. That he is the *Image of the invisible God, the first born of every Creature, by whom all things were created, that are in Heaven, and that are in the Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or*

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Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt, Col. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. Such an one alone and no other was meet to bear and uphold this Glory, And the Glory of his Perſon is ſuch as that it is the Bleſſedneſs of all Creatures to center in this Glory of his Office.

2. THIS is that Glory which God deſigned unto his only Son incarnate; and it gives us a little View into the Glory of that Myſtery, the wonderful eternal Deſign of God to glorifie himſelf in the Incarnation of Chriſt. God would have his eternal, his only begotten Son to be incarnate, to take our Nature on him, to be made Man. What is his Deſign in this incomprehenſible Work of his Wiſdom, Love and Power? Indeed in the firſt place, it was for the *Redemption of the Church*, by the Sacrifice of himſelf and other Acts of his Mediation. But there is that which is more general and comprehenſive, and wherein all the concerns of the Glory of God do center. And this was that he might *gather all things into one* in him, that the whole Creation, eſpecially that which was to be eternally bleſſed, ſhould have a new Head given unto it for its Suſtentation, Preſervation, Order, Honor and Safety. All Springs are in him, and all Streams are unto him, and in and by him unto God. Who can expreſs the Divine Beauty, Order and Harmony of all things that are in this their *Recapitulation* in Chriſt? The Union and Communion between Angels and Men, the Order of the whole Family in Heaven and Earth, the Communication of Life, Grace, Power, Mercy and Conſolation to the Church, the Rule and Diſpoſal of all things unto the Glory of God, do all depend hereon. This Glory God deſigned unto his Son incarnate, and it was the greateſt, the higheſt that could be communicated unto him. For as the Apoſtle obſerves, *All things are put in ſubjection unto him, he only excepted*

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who doth so make them subject, that is God the Father, 1 *Cor.* 15.

THERE is no Contemplation of the Glory of Christ that ought more to affect the Hearts of them that do believe, with Delight and Joy, than this of the *Recapitulation* of all things in him. One View by Faith of him in the place of God as the supream Head of the whole Creation, moving, acting, guiding and disposing of it, will bring in spiritual Refreshment unto a believing Soul.

AND it will do so the more, in that it gives a glorious Representation of his Divine Nature also. For that any meer Creature should thus be an Head of Life, Motion and Power, as also of soveraign Rule, and disposal of the whole new Creation, with all things reduced into order thereby, is not only an impious, but a foolish Imagination.

DID we live more in the Contemplation of this Glory of Christ, and of the Wisdom of God in this *Recapitulation* of all things in him, there is not any thing of our *Duty* which it would not mind us of, nor any thing of *Priviledge* which it would not give us a Sence of, as might easily be demonstrated.

3. IN particular, the Lord Christ is glorious herein, in that the whole Breach made on the Glory of God in the Creation by the Entrance of Sin, is hereby repaired and made up. The Beauty and Order of the whole Creation consisted in its dependance on God by the Obedience of the rational Part of it, Angels and Men. Thereby were the being, the goodness, the wisdom and power of God made manifest. But the Beauty of this Order was defaced, and the Manifestation of the Divine Perfections unto the glory of God eclipsed by the Entrance of Sin. But all is restored, repaired and made up in this *Recapitulation* of all things in one *new Head* Christ Jesus;

Jesus; yea, the whole curious Frame of the Divine Creation is rendred more beautiful than it was before. Hence the whole of it groaneth for the Interest of each Part in this Restauration of all things. Whatever there is of Order, of Beauty, of Glory in Heaven above, or in Earth beneath, it all ariseth from this new Relation of the Creation unto the Son of God. Whatever is not gathered into one, even in him, in its place and according to its measure, is under Darkness, Disorder and the Curse. Hence the *Jews* have a saying, that *in the days of the Messiah all things shall be healed but the Serpent*, that is the Devil, and wicked Men which are as his Seed.

4. HE is glorious herein, in that he is appointed as the only means of exerting, and expressing all the Treasures of the Infinite Wisdom of God towards his Creatures. The Wisdom of God is absolutely, always and in all things Infinite. God doth not, God cannot act with more Wisdom in one thing than in another; as in the Creation of man than in that of any inanimate Creatures. In the first Creation Infinite Wisdom was the inseparable companion of Infinite Power. *How marvellous are thy works, O Lord! in Wisdom hast thou made them all.* But when the effects of this Divine Wisdom in their principal beauty and glory were defaced, greater Treasures of Wisdom were required unto their Reparation. And in this *Recollection* of all things in Christ did God lay them forth unto the utmost of whatever he will do in dealing with his Creatures; so the Apostle expresseth it, Ephes. 3. 10. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.* By the *Recapitulation* of all things into this one head, the manifold various unsearchable Wisdom of God was made known unto the Angels themselves. They knew not before of the Design and Work of God after the Entrance of Sin. These could not com-

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prehend the Wiſdom that might repair that Loſs. They knew not that Divine Wiſdom had another way to take herein, at leaſt they knew not what way that ſhould be. But hereby the manifold Wiſdom of God, his infinite Wiſdom in the Treaſures of it, able by various ways to attain the ends of his Glory, was made known unto them. Herein, namely, in the *Recollection* of all things in Chriſt, Divine Wiſdom hath made known and repreſented it ſelf in all its Stores and Treaſures unto Angels and Men. *In him are hid*, and by him are diſplayed, *all the treaſures of Wiſdom*, Col. 2. 3. Herein is he glorious, and will be ſo to Eternity.

5. He is glorious herein, in that hereby *firmneſs and ſecurity is communicated unto the whole new Creation.* The firſt Creation in its Order was a curious and glorious Fabrick. But every thing depending immediately on God by vertue of the Principles of its own Nature, and the Law of its Obedience, all was brought unto a Loſs by the ſin of Angels and Men. But now every thing that belongs unto this new Creation, even every Believer in the World as well as the Angels in Heaven being gathered together in this one Head, the whole and all, and every part and member of it, even every particular Believer are ſecured from Ruine, ſuch as befel all things before. In this *New Head* they have an indiſſoluble Conſiſtency.

BUT *manum de Tabula.* I ſhall inſiſt on no more Inſtances of this Nature which plentifully offer themſelves in the Scripture unto us. For who can declare this glory of Chriſt? Who can ſpeak of theſe things as he ought? I am ſo far from deſigning to ſet forth the whole of it, that I am deeply ſenſible how little a Portion I can comprehend of the leaſt part of it. Nor can I attain unto any Satisfaction in theſe Meditations, but what Iſſue in an humble Admiration.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Differences between our beholding the Glory of Chriſt by Faith in this World, and by ſight in Heaven. The firſt of them explained.

WE *walk here by faith, and not by ſight*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 7. That is, in the Life of God, in our walking before him, in the whole of our Obedience therein, we are under the Conduct and Influence of *Faith* and not of *Sight*. Thoſe are the two ſpiritual Powers of our Souls; by the one whereof, we are made Partakers of Grace, Holineſs and Obedience in this Life; and by the other of eternal Bleſſedneſs and Glory.

BOTH theſe, namely, *Faith* and *Sight*, the one in this Life, the other in that which is to come, have the ſame immediate Object. For they are the Abilities of the Soul to go forth unto, and to embrace their Object. Now this Object of them both, is *the Glory of Chriſt*, as hath been declared, as alſo what that glory is, and wherein it doth conſiſt; wherefore my preſent Deſign is to enquire into the *difference that is between our beholding of the Glory of Chriſt in this World by Faith, and the Viſion which we ſhall have of the ſame Glory hereafter.*

THE *latter of theſe* is peculiarly intended in that Prayer of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt for his Diſciples, Joh. 17. 24. *Father I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou haſt given me.* But I ſhall not diſtinctly inſiſt upon it,

my design being another way, respecting principally the *Work of God in this Life*, and the Priviledges which we enjoy thereby: Yet I shall now take a short Prospect of that also; not absolutely, but in the Differences that are between *Faith* and *Sight*, or the View which we have of the glory of Christ in this World by *Faith*, and that which they enjoy by *Vision* who are above; the Object of them both being adequately the same.

BUT herein also, I shall have respect only unto *some of those things* which concern our Practise, or the present immediate Exercise of Faith. For I have elsewhere handled at large the *State of the Church above*, or that of present glory; giving an account of the Administration of the *Office of Christ in Heaven*, his Presence among the glorified Souls, and the Adoration of God under his Conduct: I have also declared the Advantage which they have by being with him, and the Prospect they have of his glory. Therefore these things must here be only touched on.

THESE Differences may be referred unto two heads. (1.) Those which arise from the *different Natures* and Actings of those *Means* and *Instruments* whereby we apprehend this glory of Christ, namely, *Faith* and *Vision*. And (2.) Those that arise from the different *Effects* produced by them. Instances in each kind shall be given.

1. THE *View* which we have of the glory of Christ by Faith in this World, is *obscure*, *dark*, *inevident*, *reflexive*. So the Apostle declares, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *Now we see through a Glass darkly* ἐν αἰνίγματι. *Through or by a Glass in a Riddle*, a Parable, a dark Saying. There is a double *figurative* Limitation put upon our View of the glory of Christ, taken from the two ways of our Perception of what we apprehend, namely, the *Sight* of things, and the *hearing* of Words.

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THE first is, that we have this View not *directly*, but *reflexively*, and by way of a Representation, as in a *Glass*. For I take the Glass here, not to be *Optical*, or a Prospective which helps the Sight, but a *Speculum*, or a Glass which reflects an Image of what we do behold. It is a Sight like that which we have of a Man in a Glass, when we see not his Person or Substance, but an Image or Representation of them only, which is imperfect.

The Shadow or *Image* of this glory of Christ is drawn in the Gospel, and therein we behold it as the Likeness of a Man represented unto us in a Glass; and although it be *obscure* and imperfect in comparison of his own real, substantial glory, which is the Object of Vision in Heaven; yet is it the only *Image* and *Representation* of himself, which he hath left, and given unto us in this World. That woful cursed Invention of *framing Images* of him out of Stocks and Stones however adorned, or Representations of him by the *Art of painting*, are so far from presenting unto the Minds of Men any thing of his real glory, that nothing can be more effectual to divert their Thoughts and Apprehensions from it. But by this figurative Expression of *seeing in a Glass*, the Apostle declares the *comparative Imperfection* of our present View of the glory of Christ.

BUT the *Allusion* may be taken from an *Optick Glass* or *Tube* also, whereby the sight of the Eye is helped in beholding things at a great distance. By the aid of such *Glasses* Men will discover Stars or heavenly Lights, which by reason of their distance from us, the Eye of it self is no way able to discern. And those which we do see, are more *fully* represented, though remote enough from being so, *perfectly*. Such a *Glass* is the Gospel, without which we can make no discovery of Christ at all, but in the use

of it, we are far enough from beholding him in the *just dimensions* of his glory.

AND he adds another intimation of this Imperfection, in an Allusion unto the way whereby things are proposed and conveyed unto the Minds and Apprehensions of Men: Now this is by *Words*. And these are either plain, proper and direct, or dark, *figurative* and *parabolical*: And this latter way makes the Conception of things to be difficult and imperfect; and by reason of the imperfection of our View of the glory of Christ by Faith in this World, the Apostle saith, it is in αἰνίγματα in a *Riddle*. These αἰνίγματα the *Psalmist* calls חִידוֹת *dark sayings*, Psal. 78. 2.

BUT here it must be observed, that the description and Representation of the Lord Christ and his glory in the Gospel, is not absolutely, or in it self either dark or obscure. Yea, it is *perspicuous*, plain and direct. Christ is therein *evidently set forth crucified*, exalted, glorified. But the Apostle doth not here discourse concerning the Way or Means of the Revelation of it unto us, but of the Means or *Instrument* whereby we comprehend that Revelation. This is our Faith, which as it is in us, being weak and imperfect, we comprehend the *Representation* that is made unto us of the Glory of Christ, as Men do the sence of a *dark Saying*, *a Riddle*, *a Parable*, that is, imperfectly, and with difficulty.

ON the account hereof we may say at present, *How little a portion is it that we know of him?* as *Job* speaks of God, *Chap.* 26. 14. How imperfect are our Conceptions of him? How weak are our Minds in their Management? There is no part of his glory that we can fully comprehend. And what we do comprehend (as there is a *Comprehension* in Faith, *Eph.* 3. 18.) we cannot abide in the steady contemplation of. For ever blessed be that Soveraign Grace, whence it is that he who *commanded the light*

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to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of his own Glory in the face of Jesus Christ, and therein of the glory of Christ himself; that he hath so revealed him unto us, as that we may love him, admire him and obey him; but constantly, steadily, and clearly to behold his glory in this life we are not able, for we *walk by Faith and not by Sight*.

HENCE our sight of him here, is as it were by *Glances* liable to be clouded by many interpositions. *Behold he standeth behind the wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing* (מציץ flourishing) *himself at the latteſs*, Cant. 2. 9. There is a great Interposition between him and us, as a *Wall*; and the means of the discovery of himself unto us, as through a *Window* and *Latteſs*, include a great instability and imperfection in our view and Apprehension of him. There is a *Wall* between him and us, which yet he standeth behind. Our *present mortal state* is this *Wall*, which must be demolished before we can see him as he is. In the mean time he looketh through the *Windows* of the ordinances of the Gospel. He gives us sometimes, when he is pleased to stand in those *Windows*, a view of himself; but it is *imperfect*, as is our sight of a man through a *Window*. The appearances of him at these *Windows* are full of refreshment unto the souls of them that do believe. But our view of them is imperfect, transient, and doth not abide: We are for the most part quickly left to bemoan what we have lost. And then our best is but to cry; *As the hart panteth after the water-brook, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before thee?* When wilt thou again give me to see thee, tho but as through the *Windows*? Alas what distress do we oftentimes sit down in, after these views of Christ and his Glory! But he proceeds further yet; *and flourishes himself through the latteſſes*. This displaying of the glory of Christ called the *flourishing*

himself, is by the *promises of the Gospel* as they are explained in the ministry of the word. In them are represented unto us the desirable beauties and glories of Christ; how precious, how amiable is he as represented in them? How are the Souls of Believers ravished with the views of them? Yet is this discovery of him also but as through a *Latteſs*. We see him but by parts, unsteadily and unevenly.

SUCH I say is the sight of the glory of Christ which we have in this world by Faith. It is *dark*, it is but *in part*. It is but *weak*, *transient*, *imperfect*, *partial*. It is but *little* that we can at any time discover of it; it is but a *little while*, that we can abide in the contemplation of what we do discover, *rara hora*, *brevis mora*. Sometimes it is unto us as the Sun when it is under a Cloud, we cannot perceive it. When he hideth his face, who then can behold him? As *Job* speaks, so may we, *Behold I go forward, but he is not there: and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him*, chap. 23 8, 9. Which way soever we turn our selves, and what duties soever we apply our selves unto, we can obtain no distinct view of his glory. Yet on the other hand, it is sometimes as the Sun when it *shines in its brightness*, and we cannot bear the rays of it. In infinite condescention he says unto his Church, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me*, Cant. 6. 5. As if he could not bear that overcoming affectionate love, which looks through the eyes of the Church in its acting of Faith on him. Ah! How much more do we find our souls overcome with his love, when at any he is pleased to make any clear discoveries of his glory unto us!

LET us now on the other hand, take a little Consideration of that *Vision*, which we shall have of the same Glory in Heaven, that we may compare them together.

VISION

VISION or the ſight which we ſhall have of the glory of Chriſt in Heaven, is *immediate*, *direct*, *intuitive*, and therefore *ſteady*, even and conſtant: And it is ſo on a double Account. (1.) Of the *Object* which ſhall be propoſed unto us. (2.) Of the *Viſivé Power* or faculty wherewith we ſhall be endued; from the imperfection of both which in this World, ariſeth the imperfection of our view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, as hath been declared.

1. THE *Object* of it will be *real and ſubſtantial*. Chriſt himſelf in his own perſon with all his glory, ſhall be continually with us, before us, propoſed unto us. We ſhall no longer have an *Image*, a Repreſentation of him, ſuch as is the delineation of his Glory in the Goſpel. We *ſhall ſee him*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *face to face*; 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. which he oppoſeth unto our ſeeing him *darkly as in a glaſs*, which is the utmoſt that faith can attain to. We ſhall *ſee him as he is*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 2, not as now in an imperfect deſcription of him. As a man ſees his neighbour when they ſtand and converſe together face to face; So ſhall we ſee the Lord Chriſt in his glory, and not as *Moſes* who had only a tranſient ſight of ſome parts of the Glory of God, when he cauſed it to paſs by him.

THERE will be uſe herein, of our bodily *eyes*, as ſhall be declared. For as *Job* ſays, *in our Fleſh ſhall we ſee our Redeemer*, and our eyes ſhall behold him, Chap. 19. 25, 26, 27. That corporeal ſence ſhall not be reſtored unto us, and that glorified above what we can conceive, but for this great uſe of the eternal beholding of Chriſt and his Glory. Unto whom it is not a matter of rejoycing, that with the *ſame eyes* wherewith they ſee the tokens and ſigns of him in the Sacrament of the Supper, they ſhall behold himſelf immediately, in his own perſon. But principally, as we ſhall ſee immediately, this viſion is *intellectual*. It is not therefore the meer *Human Nature* of Chriſt, that is the object of it, but his *Divine Perſon* as

that nature ſubſiſteth therein. What is that perfection which we ſhall have (for *that which is perfect muſt come and do away that which is in part*) in the comprehenſion of the *hypoſtatical Union*, I underſtand not; but this I know, that in the immediate beholding of the Perſon of Chriſt, we ſhall ſee a glory in it a thouſand times above what here we can conceive. The excellencies of Infinite Wiſdom, Love and Power therein, will be continually before us. And all the glories of the Perſon of Chriſt, which we have before weakly and faintly enquired into, will be in our ſight for evermore.

HENCE the ground and cauſe of our Bleſſedneſs is, that *we ſhall be ever with the Lord*, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. As himſelf prays, *that we may be with him where he is, to behold his glory*: Here we have ſome dark views of it, we cannot perfectly behold it, until *we are with him* where he is. Thereon our ſight of him will be direct, intuitive, and conſtant.

THERE is a glory, there will be ſo ſubjectively in us in the beholding of this glory of Chriſt, which is at preſent incomprehenſible. For *it doth not yet appear what we our ſelves ſhall be*, 1 John, 3. 2. Who can declare what a glory it will be in us to behold this Glory of Chriſt? And how excellent then is that glory of Chriſt it ſelf?

THIS immediate ſight of Chriſt, is that which all the Saints of God in this life do breath and pant after. Hence are they willing to be diſſolved, or deſire to *depart, that they may be with Chriſt, which is beſt for them*, Phil. 1. 23. They chuſe to be *abſent from the body and preſent with the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 8. Or that they may enjoy the inexpreſſibly longed for ſight of Chriſt in his glory. Thoſe who do not ſo long for it, whoſe ſouls and minds are not frequently viſited with earneſt deſires after it, unto whom the thoughts of it are not their relief in Trouble, and their chiefeſt joy, are carnal, blind, and *cannot ſee afar off*.

He

He that is truly ſpiritual, entertains and refreſheth himſelf with thoughts hereof continually.

2. IT will be ſo from that *Viſive Power* or faculty of beholding the Glory of Chriſt, which we ſhall then receive. Without this we cannot ſee him as he is. When he was transfigured *in the Mount*, and had on his Human Nature ſome reflections of his Divine Glory, his Diſciples that were with him, were rather amazed, than refreſhed by it. Mat. 17. 4. They ſaw his glory, but ſpake thereon *they knew not what*, Luk. 9. 30, 33. And the reaſon hereof was becauſe no man in this life can have a *Viſive Power*, either ſpiritual, or corporeal, directly and immediately to behold the real Glory of Chriſt.

SHOULD the Lord Jeſus appear now to any of us in his Majeſty and Glory, it would not be unto our edification nor conſolation. For we are not *meet* nor able, by the Power of any Light or Grace that we have received, or can receive, to bear the immediate appearance and repreſentation of them. His beloved Apoſtle *John* had *leaned on his boſom* probably many a time in this life, in the intimate familiarities of love: But when he afterwards appeared unto him in his Glory, he fell at *his feet as dead*, Rev. 1. 17. And when he appeared unto *Paul*, all the account he could give thereof, was, *that he ſaw a light from Heaven above the brightneſs of the Sun*, whereon he and all that were with him, *fell to the ground*, Act. 26. 13, 14.

AND this was one Reaſon why in the days of his Miniſtry here on earth, his Glory was vailed with the infirmities of the fleſh, and all ſorts of ſufferings, as we have before related. The Church in this life is no way meet, by the Grace which it can be made partaker of, to converſe with him in the immediate manifeſtations of his Glory.

AND

AND therefore those who dream of his *Personal Reign* on the earth before the day of Judgment, unless they suppose that all the Saints shall be *perfectly glorified* also (which is only to bring down Heaven to the Earth for a while, to no purpose) provide not at all for the edification or consolation of the Church. For no *present grace* advanced unto the highest degree whereof in this World it is capable, can make us meet for an immediate converse with Christ in his unvailed Glory.

How much more abominable is the folly of men, who would represent the Lord Christ in his present Glory by *Pictures and Images* of him? When they have done their utmost with their burnished Glass and Guildings, an eye of flesh cannot only behold it, but if it be guided by reason, see it contemptible and fooliſh. But the true Glory of Christ neither inward nor outward sight can bear the rays of in this life.

THE dispensation which we are meet for is only that of his *presence with us by his Spirit. We know him now no more after the flesh*, 2 Cor. 5. 16. We are advanced above that way and means of the knowledge of him by the *fleshly carnal Ordinances* of the Old Testament. And we know him not according unto that *bodily presence* of his, which his Disciples enjoyed in the days of his flesh. We have attained somewhat above that also. For such was the nature of his Ministry here on earth, that there could not be the promised dispensation of the spirit until that was finished. Therefore he tells his Disciples that *it was expedient for them that he should go away and send the spirit to them*, John. 16. 7. Hereon they had a clearer view of the Glory of Christ, than they could have by beholding him in the flesh. This is our spiritual posture and condition. We are past the knowledge of him according to the flesh; we cannot attain nor receive the *sight* of him in Glory; but *the life which we now lead, is by the Faith of the Son of God.*

I SHALL

I SHALL not here enquire into the nature of this *vision*, or the power and ability which we ſhall have in Heaven to behold the Glory of Chriſt. Some few things may be mentioned, as it relates unto our *Minds* and our *Bodies* alſo after the Reſurrection.

1. FOR the Mind, it ſhall be perfectly freed from all that Darkneſs, Unſteadineſs, and other Incapacities, which here it is accompanied with; and whereby it is weakened, hindred and obſtructed in the Exerciſe of Faith. And they are of two ſorts. Firſt, ſuch as are the remainders of that depravation of our Natures, which came upon us by ſin. Hereby our Minds became wholly vain, dark, and corrupt, as the Scripture teſtifieth, utterly unable to diſcern ſpiritual things in a due manner. This is ſo far cured and removed in this Life by Grace, as that thoſe *who were darkneſs, do become light in the Lord*, or are enabled to live unto God under the Conduct of a new ſpiritual Light communicated unto them. But it is ſo cured and removed in *part* only, it is not perfectly aboliſhed. Hence are all our remaining Weakneſſes and Incapacities in diſcerning things ſpiritual and eternal, which we yet groan under, and long for deliverance from. No Foot-ſteps, no Scars or Marks that ever it had place in our Minds ſhall abide in glory, *Epheſ.* 5. 27. Nothing ſhall weaken, diſturb, or incapacitate our Souls, in acting all their Powers unimpeded by Vanity, Diverſions, Weakneſs, Inability, upon their proper Objects. The Excellency hereof in univerſal Liberty and Power, we cannot here comprehend: Nor can we yet conceive the Glory and Beauty of thoſe immixed ſpiritual actings of our Minds, which ſhall have no *Clog* upon them, no Encumbrance in them, no Alloy of Droſs accompanying of them. One pure Act of ſpiritual Sight in diſcerning the Glory of Chriſt, one pure Act of Love in cleaving unto God,

will

will bring in more Bleſſedneſs and Satisfaction into our Minds, than in this World we are capable of.

2. THERE is an *Incapacity* in our Minds, as unto their Actings on things ſpiritual and eternal, that is meerly natural from the Poſture wherein they are, and the *Figure* which they are to make in this Life. For they are here *cloathed with Fleſh*, and that debaſed and corrupted. Now in this State, though the Mind act its Conceptions by the Body as its *Organ* and Inſtrument: Yet is it variouſly ſtreightned, encumbred and impeded in the exerciſe of its native Powers, eſpecially towards things heavenly, by this Priſon of the Fleſh, wherein it is immured. There is an *Angelical* Excellency in the pure Actings of the Soul, when delivered from all material Inſtruments of them; or when they are all glorified and made ſuitable helps in its utmoſt ſpiritual Activity. How and by what degrees our Minds ſhall be freed from theſe Obſtructions in their beholding the glory of Chriſt, ſhall be afterwards declared.

2. AGAIN, a *new light*, the *light of Glory* ſhall be implanted in them. There is a Light in Nature, which is the Power of a Man to diſcern the things of Man. An Ability to know, perceive and judge of things natural. It is that *Spirit of a Man which is the Candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly*, Prov. 20. 27.

BUT by the light hereof no man can diſcern ſpiritual things in a due manner, as the Apoſtle declares, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Wherefore God gives a ſuperior, a ſupernatural Light, the Light of Faith and Grace, unto them whom he effectually calls unto the knowledge of himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt. *He ſhines into their Hearts to give them the knowledge of his Glory in the face of his dear Son.* Howbeit this new Light doth not aboliſh, blot out, or render uſeleſs the other Light of Nature, as the Sun when it riſeth extinguiſheth the Light of the Stars:

Stars: But it directs it, and rectifies it, as unto its principle, object and end. Yet is it in its ſelf, a Light quite of another Nature. But he who hath only the former Light, can underſtand nothing of it, becauſe he hath no Taſte or Experience of its Power and Operations. He may talk of it, and make Enquiries about it, but he knows it not.

NOW we have received this *Light of Faith* and Grace, whereby we diſcern ſpiritual things, and behold the glory of Chriſt in the Imperfect manner before deſcribed. But in Heaven there ſhall be a ſuperadded *light of Glory*, which ſhall make the Mind it ſelf *ſhine as the Firmament*, Dan. 12. 3. I ſhall only ſay three things of it. (1.) That as the *Light of Grace* doth not deſtroy or aboliſh the *Light of Nature*, but rectifie and improve it; ſo the *Light of Glory* ſhall not aboliſh or deſtroy the *Light of Faith and Grace*, but by incorporating with it, render it abſolutely perfect. (2.) That as by the *Light of Nature*, we cannot clearly comprehend the true Nature and Efficacy of the *Light of Grace*, becauſe it is of another Kind, and is ſeen only in its own Light; ſo by the *Light of Grace* we cannot abſolutely comprehend this *Light of Glory*, being of a peculiar Kind and Nature, ſeen perfectly only by its own Light. *It doth not appear what we ſhall be.* (3.) That this is the beſt Notion we can have of this *Light of Glory*, that in the firſt Inſtance of its Operation, it *perfectly transforms the Soul into the Image and Likeneſs of Chriſt.*

THIS is the *progreſs of our nature* unto its Reſt and Bleſſedneſs. The principles remaining in it concerning *Good and Evil*, with its practical convictions, are not deſtroyed, but improved by grace; as its blindneſs, darkneſs and enmity to God, are in part taken away. Being renewed by Grace, what it receives here of ſpiritual Life and Light, ſhall never be deſtroyed but be perfected in Glory. Grace renews Nature; Glory perfects Grace; and

and ſo the whole Soul is brought unto its reſt in God. We have an Image of it in the *blind Man* whom our Saviour cured, *Mark* 8. 22,23,24. He was abſolutely blind, born ſo, no doubt. Upon the firſt touch his Eyes were opened, and he ſaw but very obſcurely; *he ſaw men walking like Trees.* But on the ſecond he ſaw all things clearly. Our minds in themſelves are abſolutely blind. The firſt viſitation of them by Grace, gives them a ſight of things ſpiritual, heavenly and eternal, but it is obſcure and unſteady. The *ſight of Glory* makes all things clear and evident.

2*ly*; THE body as glorified, with its ſenſes, ſhall have its uſe and place herein. After we are cloathed again with our fleſh, we ſhall *ſee our Redeemer with our Eyes.* We know not here what power and ſpirituality there will be in the acts of our glorified Bodies. Such they will be, as ſhall bear a part in eternal Bleſſedneſs. Holy *Stephen*, the firſt Martyr, took up ſomewhat of Glory by *Anticipation* before he died. For when he was brought to his Tryal before the *Council*, all that ſate therein *looking ſtedfaſtly on him, ſaw his face as the face of an Angel, Act.* 6. 15. He had his *Tranſfiguration*, according unto his meaſure, anſwerable unto that of our Bleſſed Saviour in the Mount. And by this initial Beam of Glory, he received ſuch a piercing vivacity and edge on his *bodily eyes*, that through all thoſe inconceivable diſtances between the earth and the reſidence of the Bleſſed, he looked ſtedfaſtly into Heaven, and *ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God*, Act. 7. 55, 56. Who then can declare what will be the power and acting of this ſenſe of *ſight* when perfectly glorified; or what ſweetneſs and refreſhment may be admitted into our Souls thereby?

IT was a priviledge (who would not have longed to partake of it?) to have ſeen him with our bodily eyes in the days of his fleſh, as did the Apoſtles and other his Diſciples. Howbeit he was not *then glorified* himſelf in the

the manifeſtation of his Glory; nor they who ſaw him, in the change or transformation of their nature. How great this privilenge was, himſelf declares unto thoſe that ſo ſaw him, *Mat.* 13. 17. *Verily I ſay unto you, that many Prophets and righteous Men have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee*; whereunto we ſhall ſpeak immediately. And if this were ſo excellent a priviledge, as that we cannot but congratulate them by whom it was enjoyed, how excellent, how glorious will it be, when with theſe eyes of ours, glorioufly purified and ſtrengthned beyond thoſe of *Stephen*, we ſhall behold Chriſt himſelf immediately in the fulneſs of his Glory! He alone perfectly underſtands the greatneſs and excellency hereof, who prayed his Father that thoſe who *believe in him, may be where he is, ſo to behold his Glory.*

THESE are ſome of the grounds of this firſt *difference* between our beholding the Glory of Chriſt by *Faith* here, and by immediate Viſion hereafter. Hence the one is weak, imperfect, obſcure, reflexive; the other direct, immediate, eaven and conſtant; and we may ſtay a little in the contemplation of theſe things.

THIS view of the *Glory of Chriſt* which we have now ſpoken unto, is that which we are breathing and *panting* after; that which the Lord Chriſt prays that we may arrive unto; that which the Apoſtle teſtifies to be *our beſt*; the beſt thing, or ſtate, which our nature is capable of, that which brings eternal reſt and ſatisfaction unto our Souls.

HERE our Souls are burthened with innumerable Infirmities, and our Faith is clogged in its Operations by Ignorance and Darkneſs. This makes our beſt eſtate and higheſt attainments to be accompanied with *groans* for deliverance. *We which have received the firſt fruits of the ſpirit, even we our ſelves groan within our ſelves, waiting for the Adoption, even the redemption of the body*, Rom. 8. 23. Yea, whilſt we are in this Tabernacle, we *groan earneſtly*

as being burthened, because we are not *absent from the body, and present with the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 2, 4, 8. The more we grow in Faith, and Spiritual Light, the more sensible are we of our present burthens, and the more vehemently do we *groan* for deliverance into the *perfect liberty of the Sons of God*. This is the posture of their minds who have received the *first fruits of the Spirit*, in the most eminent degree. The nearer any one is to Heaven, the more earnestly he desires to be there, because Christ is there. For the more frequent and steady are our views of him by faith, the more do we long and groan for the removal of all obstructions and interpositions in our so doing. Now groaning is a vehement desire mixed with sorrow, for the present want of what is desired. The desire hath sorrow, and that sorrow hath joy and refreshment in it; like a shower that falls on a Man in a Garden in the Spring; it wets him, but withall refresheth him with the Savor it causeth in the Flowers and Herbs of the Garden, where he is. And this *groaning*, which when it is constant and habitual, is one of the choicest effects of Faith in this life, respects what we would be *delivered from*, and what we would *attain unto*. The *first* is expressed, *Rom.* 7. 24. The *other* in the places now mentioned. And this frame with an intermixture of some sighs from weariness by the troubles, sorrows, pains, sicknesses of this life, is the best we can here attain unto.

ALAS! we cannot here *think of Christ*, but we are quickly ashamed of, and troubled at our own thoughts: So confused are they, so unsteady, so imperfect. Commonly they issue in a groan or a sigh; *Oh when shall we come unto him? when shall we be ever with him? when shall we see him as he is?* And if at any time he begins to give more than ordinary evidences and intimations of his Glory and Love unto our Souls, we are not able to bear them,

them, ſo as to give them any abiding reſidence in our Minds. But ordinarily, this trouble and groaning is amongſt our beſt attainments in this World, a trouble which, I pray God, I may never be delivered from, until deliverance do come at once from this ſtate of mortality. Yea the good Lord encreaſe this trouble more and more in all that believe.

THE heart of a believer affected with the Glory of Chriſt, is like the *Needle* touched with the *Loadſtone*. It can no longer be quiet, no longer be ſatisfied in a diſtance from him. It is put into a continual motion towards him. The motion indeed is *weak* and *tremulous*. Pantings, breathings, ſighings, groanings, in prayer, in meditations, in the ſecret receſſes of our Minds, are the life of it. However it is continually preſſing towards him. But it obtains not its *point*, it comes not to its center and reſt in this World.

BUT now *above*, all things are clear and ſerene; all plain and evident in our beholding the Glory of Chriſt; we ſhall be *ever with him*, and *ſee him as he is*. This is Heaven, this is Bleſſedneſs, this is Eternal Reſt.

THE *Perſon of Chriſt* in all his Glory ſhall be continually before us; and the eyes of our underſtandings ſhall be ſo glorioufly illuminated, as that we ſhall be able ſteadily to behold and comprehend that Glory.

BUT alas! here at preſent our Minds *recoil*, our Meditations fail, our Hearts are overcome, our Thoughts confuſed, and our Eyes turn aſide from the Luſtre of this Glory; nor can we abide in the Contemplation of it. But there, an immediate, conſtant view of it, will bring in everlaſting refreſhment and joy unto our whole Souls.

THIS *beholding of the Glory of Chriſt given him by his Father*, is indeed ſubordinate unto the ultimate viſion of the eſſence of God. What that is we cannot well conceive; only we know that *the pure in heart ſhall ſee God*.

But it hath such an immediate connexion with it, and subordination unto it, as that without it we can never behold the face of God, as the objective blessedness of our Souls. For he is and shall be to eternity, the only means of Communication between God and the Church.

AND we may take some Direction in our looking into and longing after this *perfect view* of the Glory of Christ, from the example of the Saints under the Old Testament. The sight which they had of the Glory of Christ, for *they* also *saw his Glory* through the obscurity of its Revelation, and its being vailed with *types and shadows*, was weak and imperfect in the most illuminated believers, much inferior unto what we now have by faith, through the Gospel. Yet such it was, as encouraged them to *enquire and search diligently into what was revealed*, 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. Howbeit their discoveries were but dark and confused, such as Men have of things at a great distance, or *in a Land that is very far off*, as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 33. 16. And the continuance of this Vail on the Revelation of the Glory of Christ, whilst a Vail of Ignorance and Blindness was upon their Hearts and Minds, proved the ruin of that Church in its Apostacy, as the Apostle declares, 2 *Cor.* 3. 7, 13, 14. This *double vail* (the *covering covered*, the *vail vailed*) God promised to take away, *Isa.* 25. 7. And then shall they turn to the Lord, when they shall be able clearly to behold the Glory of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 3. 16.

BUT this caused them who were real Believers among them, to desire, long, and pray for the removal of these Vails, the Departure of those shadows, which made it as Night unto them in comparison of what they knew would appear, when the *Sun of Righteousness should arise with healing in his Wings*. They thought it long ere *the day did break, and the shadows flee away*, *Cant.* 2. 17. Chap. 4. 6. There was an ἀποκαραδοκία as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 8. 19.

8. 19. A thrusting *forth of the head* with desire and expectation of the exhibition of the Son of God in the flesh, and the accomplishment of all divine promises therein. Hence he was called *the Lord whom they sought and delighted in*, Mal. 3. 1.

AND great was the spiritual Wisdom of believers in those days. They rejoyced and gloried in the Ordinances of Divine Worship which they did enjoy. They looked on them as their chiefest priviledge, and attended unto them with diligence, as an effect of Divine Wisdom and Love, as also because they had a *shadow of good things to come*. But yet at the same time they longed and desired that the *time of Reformation were come*, wherein they should all be removed; that so they might behold and enjoy the good things signified by them. And those who did not so, but rested in, and trusted unto their present Institutions, were not accepted with God. Those who were really illuminated did not so, but lived in constant desires after the revelation of the whole Mystery of the Wisdom of God in Christ, as did the Angels themselves, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *Ephes.* 3. 9, 10.

IN this frame of heart and suitable actings of their Souls, there was more of the *power* of true faith and love than is found among the most at this day. They saw the promises afar off, and were *perswaded of them, and imbraced them*, Heb. 11. 13. They reached out the arms of their most intent Affections, to embrace the Things that were promised. We have an instance of this frame in Old *Simeon*, who so soon as he had taken the Child Jesus in his Arms, cryed out, *Now Lord, let me depart*, now let me dye, this is that which my Soul hath longed for, *Luk.* 2. 28, 29.

OUR present darkness and weakness in beholding the Glory of Christ, is not like theirs. It is not occasioned by a *vail of Types and Shadows* cast on it by the Repre-

tive Inſtitutions of it; It doth not ariſe from the want of a clear *Doctrinal Revelation* of the Perſon and Office of Chriſt; But as was before declared, it proceedeth from two other Cauſes. Firſt from the *nature of Faith* it ſelf in comparison of Viſion. It is not able to look directly into this *excellent Glory*, nor fully to comprehend it. Secondly, from the *way of its propoſal*, which is not *ſubſtantial* of the thing it ſelf, but only of an Image of it, as in a Glaſs. But the ſight, the view of the Glory of Chriſt, which we ſhall have in Heaven, is much more above that which we now enjoy by the Goſpel, than what we do, or may ſo enjoy, is above what they have attained under their Types and Shadows. There is a far greater diſtance between the Viſion of Heaven, and the ſight which we have now by faith, than is between the ſight which we now have, and what they had under the Old Teſtament. Heaven doth more excell the Goſpel-State, than that State doth the Law. Wherefore, if they did ſo pray, ſo long for, ſo deſire the removal of their Shadows and Vails, that they might ſee what we now ſee, that they might ſo behold the Glory of Chriſt, as we may behold it in the Light of the Goſpel; how much more ſhould we, if we have the ſame Faith with them, the ſame Love (which neither will nor can be ſatisfied without perfect fruition) long and pray for the removal of all Weakneſs, of all Darkneſs and Interpoſition, that we may come unto that immediate beholding of his Glory, which he ſo earneſtly prayed, that we might be brought unto.

TO ſum up briefly what hath been ſpoken. There are three things to be conſidered concerning the Glory of Chriſt, three degrees in its manifeſtation; The *Shadow*, the *perfect Image*, and the *Subſtance* it ſelf. Thoſe under the Law had only the *ſhadow* of it, and of the things that belong unto it, they had not the *perfect Image* of them, *Heb.* 10. 1. Under the Goſpel we have the *perfect Image*, which

which they had not; or a clear compleat revelation and declaration of it presenting it unto us as in a *glass*: But the enjoyment of these things in their *Substance* is referred for Heaven; we must be *where he is*, that we may behold his Glory. Now there is a greater difference and distance between the real substance of any thing, and the most perfect image of it, than there is between the most perfect image, and the lowest shadow of the same thing. If then they longed to be freed from their state of Types and Shadows, to enjoy the Representation of the Glory of Christ in that Image of it, which is given us in the Gospel; much more ought we to breath and pant after our deliverance from beholding it in the *Image* of it, that we may enjoy the *Substance* it self. For whatever can be manifest of Christ on this side Heaven, it is granted unto us for this end, that we may the more fervently desire to be present with him.

AND as it was their Wisdom and their Grace to *rejoyce* in the Light they had, and in those *typical Administrations* of Divine Worship which shadowed out the Glory of Christ unto them, yet did always pant after that more excellent Light and full Discovery of it, which was to be made by the Gospel; So it will be ours also, thankfully to use and improve the *Revelations* which we enjoy of it, and those *Institutions of Worship*, wherein our Faith is assisted in the view thereof; yet so as continually to breath after that perfect, that glorifying *sight* of it, which is reserved for Heaven above.

AND may we not a little examine our selves by these things? Do we esteem this *pressing towards the perfect view of the Glory of Christ* to be our Duty, and do we abide in the performance of it? If it be otherwise with any of us, it is a signal evidence that our Profession is *Hypocritical*. If Christ be in us, he is the hope of Glory in us; and where that hope is, it will be active in desires of the

things hoped for. Many love the World to well, and have their minds too much filled with the things of it, to entertain desires of *speeding through* it unto a state wherein they may behold the Glory of Christ. They are at home, and are unwilling to be absent from the body, tho to be present with the Lord. They hope it may be that such a season will come at one time or another, and then it will be the best they can look for when they can be here no more. But they have but a little sight of the Glory of Christ in this World by Faith, if any at all, who so little, so faintly desire to have the *immediate sight* of it above. I cannot understand how any Man can walk with God as he ought, or hath that Love for Jesus Christ which true Faith will produce, or doth place his Refreshments and Joy in spiritual things, in things above, that doth not on all just occasions, so meditate on the Glory of Christ in Heaven as to *long for an admittance into the immediate* sight of it.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ alone perfectly understood wherein the Eternal Blessedness of them that believe in him, doth consist. And this is the sum of what he prays for with respect unto that end; namely, *that we may be where he is to behold his Glory.* And is it not our Duty to live in a continual *desire of that* which he prayed so earnestly that we might attain? If in our selves, we as yet apprehend but little of the Glory, the Excellency, the Blessedness of it, yet ought we to repose that confidence in the Wisdom and Love of Christ, that it is our best, infinitely better than any thing we can enjoy here below.

UNTO those who are inured unto those *Contemplations*, they are the salt of their Lives, whereby every thing is condited and made savory unto them, as we shall shew afterwards. And the want of spiritual diligence herein, is that which hath brought forth a negligent, careless, wordy profession of Religion, which countenancing

it ſelf with ſome outward Duties, hath loſt out of it, the power of Faith and Love in their principal Operations. Hereby many deceive their own Souls, Goods, Lands, Poſſeſſions, Relations, Trades, with ſecular Intereſts in them, are the things whoſe Image is drawn on their Minds, and whoſe *Characters* are written on their Foreheads, as the Titles whereby they may be known. As believers beholding the Glory of Chriſt in the bleſſed Glaſs of the Goſpel, are changed into the ſame Image and Likeneſs by the Spirit of the Lord; ſo theſe Perſons beholding the Beauty of the World, and the Things that are in it, in the curſed Glaſs of Self-love, they are in their minds changed into the ſame Image. Hence perplexing Fears, vain Hopes, empty Embraces of periſhing things, fruitleſs deſires, earthly, carnal deſigns, curſed, ſelf-pleaſing Imaginations, feeding on and being fed by the Love of the World and ſelf, do abide and prevail in them. But we have not ſo learned Chriſt Jeſus.

CHAP. XIII.

The ſecond Difference between our beholding the Glory of Chriſt by Faith in this World, and by Sight in Heaven.

FAITH is the Light wherein we behold the *Glory of Chriſt in this World.* And this in its own Nature, as unto this great End, is weak and imperfect, like weak Eyes, that cannot behold the Sun in its Beauty. Hence our ſight of it differs greatly from what we ſhall enjoy in

Glory.

Glory, as hath been declared. But this is not all; it is frequently *hindred* and *interrupted* in its Operations, or it loſeth the view of its object by one means or other. As he who ſees any thing at a great diſtance, ſees it imperfectly; and the leaſt interpoſition or motion takes it quite out of his ſight. So is it with our Faith in this matter; whence ſometimes we can have little, ſometimes no ſight at all of the Glory of Chriſt by it. And this gives us, as we ſhall ſee, another *Difference* between *Faith* and *Sight*.

NOW although the conſideration hereof may ſeem a kind of *Diverſion* from our preſent Argument, yet I chooſe to inſiſt upon it, that I may evidence the Reaſons whence it is that many have ſo little *experience* of the things whereof we have treated, that they find ſo little of *Reallity* or *Power* in the exerciſe of this Grace, or the performance of this Duty. For it will appear in the iſſue, that the whole defect is in themſelves; the truth it ſelf inſiſted on, is great and efficacious.

1. WHILST we are in this life, the Lord Chriſt is pleaſed in his *Sovereign Wiſdom* ſometimes to withdraw, and as it were, to hide himſelf from us. Then do our Minds fall into Clouds and Darkneſs; Faith is at a loſs, we cannot behold his Glory; yea, we may ſeek him, but cannot find him. So *Job* complains as we obſerved before. *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him.* Chap. 23. 8, 9. Which way ſoever I turn my ſelf, whatever are my endeavours, in what way or work of his own, I ſeek him, I cannot find him, I cannot ſee him, I cannot behold his Glory. So the Church alſo complains; *Verily thou art a God that hideſt thy ſelf, O God of Iſrael the Saviour*, Iſa. 45. 15. And the *Pſalmiſt*, *How long Lord wilt thou hide thy ſelf for ever?*

ever? Psal. 89. 46. This hiding of the face of God, is the hiding of the shining of his Glory in the face of Christ Jesus, and therefore of the Glory of Christ himself, for it is the Glory of Christ to be the Representative of the Glory of God. The *Spouse* in the *Canticles* is often at a loss and herein, bemoans her self that her Beloved was withdrawn, that she could neither find him, nor see him, Chap. 3. 1, 2. Chap. 5. 6.

MEN may retain their Notions concerning Christ, his Person, and his Glory. These cannot be blotted out of their Minds, but by *Heresie* or *obdurate Stupidity*. They may have the same *Doctrinal Knowledge* of him with others; but the sight of his Glory doth not consist therein; They may abide in the outward performance of Duties towards him, as formerly; but yet all this while as unto the especial gracious Communications of himself unto their Souls, and as unto a chearful refreshing view of his Glory, He may withdraw and hide himself from them.

AS under the same outward dispensations of the word, he doth manifest himself unto some, and not unto others; (*How is it that thou wilt manifest thy self unto us, and not unto the world?* Joh. 14. 22.) Whereon they to whom he doth so manifest himself, do see him to be beautiful, glorious, and lovely (for *unto them that believe, he is precious*) whilst the others see nothing hereof, but wonder at them, by whom he is admired, *Cant.* 5. 9. So in the same dispensation of the word, he sometimes hides his face, turns away the Light of his countenance, clouds the beams of his Glory unto some, whilst others are cherished and warmed with them.

TWO Things we must here speak unto.

1. *WHY doth the Lord Christ at any time thus hide himself in his Glory from the Faith of Believers that they cannot behold him.*

2. HOW

2. *HOW we may perceive and know that he doth ſo withdraw himſelf from us, ſo that however we may pleaſe our ſelves, we do not indeed behold his Glory.*

AS unto the firſt of theſe, tho what he doth is ſuppoſed an act of Sovereign *unaccountable Wiſdom*, yet there are many holy ends of it, and conſequently reaſons for it. I ſhall mention one only. He doth it to *ſtir us up in an eminent manner unto a diligent ſearch and enquiry after him.* Woful ſloth and negligence are apt to prevail in us, in our Meditations on heavenly things. *Tho our hearts wake* (as the Spouſe ſpeaks, *Cant.* 5. 2.) in a valuation of Chriſt, his Love, and his Grace, *yet we ſleep*, as unto the due exerciſe of Faith and Love towards him. Who is it that can juſtifie himſelf herein? That can ſay, *My heart is pure, I am clean from this ſin*? Yea it is ſo far otherwiſe with many of us, that he is for ever to be admired in his patience, that on the account of our unkindneſs and woful negligence herein, he hath not only withdrawn himſelf at ſeaſons, but that he hath not utterly departed from us. Now he knows that thoſe with whom he hath been graciouſly preſent, who have had views of his Glory, altho they have not valued the mercy and priviledge of it, as they ought, yet can they not bear a ſenſe of his abſence, and his hiding himſelf from them. By this therefore will he awake them unto a diligent enquiry after him. Upon the diſcovery of his abſence and ſuch a diſtance of his Glory from them as their Faith cannot reach unto it, they become *like the Doves of the Valleys all of them mourning every one for his iniquity*, and do ſtir up themſelves to ſeek him early and with diligence, ſee *Hoſ.* 5. 5. So wherever the *Spouſe* intimates this *withdrawing of Chriſt from her*, ſhe immediately gives an account of her reſtleſs diligence and endeavours in her enquiries after him, until ſhe have found him, *Chap.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Chap.* 5. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And in theſe enquiries there is ſuch

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an exercise of Faith and Love, tho it may be acting themselves mostly in sighs and groans, as is acceptable and well pleasing to him.

WE are like him in the Parable of the Prophet that spake unto *Ahab*, who having one committed unto him to keep, affirms that *whilst he was busie here and there, he was gone*. Christ commits himself unto us, and we ought carefully to keep his presence; *I held him*, saith the Church, and *would not let him go*, Cant. 3. 4. But whilst we are busy here and there, while our Minds are over filled with other things, he withdraws himself, we cannot find him. But even this rebuke is a sanctified ordinance for our recovery, and his Return unto us.

2. Our second enquiry is, *How we may know when Christ doth so withdraw himself from us, that we do not, that we cannot behold his Glory.*

I SPEAK herein unto them alone who make the observation of the lively actings of Faith and Love in and towards Jesus Christ their chiefest concern in all their Retirements, yea in their whole walk before God. Concerning these, our enquiry is, how they may know when Christ doth in any degree or measure *withdraw* from them so as that they cannot in a due manner behold his Glory?

AND the first discovery hereof is by the *consequents* of such withdrawings. And what are the *consequents* of it, we can know no otherwise but by the effects of his presence with us, and the manifestation of himself unto us, which as unto some degrees must necessarily cease thereon.

NOW the first of these is the *Life, Vigor and effectual Acting of all Grace in us.* This is an inseparable consequent and effect of a view of his Glory. Whilst we enjoy it, *we live*; *nevertheless not we, but Christ liveth in us*, exciting and acting all his Graces in us.

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THIS is that which the Apoſtle inſtructeth us in: while we *behold his Glory, as in a Glaſs, we are transformed into the ſame Image from Glory to Glory*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. That is, whilſt by faith we contemplate on the Glory of Chriſt as revealed in the Goſpel, all Grace will thrive and flouriſh in us towards a perfect Conformity unto him. For whilſt we abide in this View and Contemplation, our Souls will be preſerved in holy Frames, and in a continual exerciſe of Love and Delight, with all other ſpiritual Affections towards him. It is impoſſible whilſt Chriſt is in the eye of our Faith as propoſed in the Goſpel, but that we ſhall labour to be like him and greatly love him. Neither is there any way for us to attain unto either of theſe which are the great concernments of our Souls, namely to be *like* unto Chriſt and to *love* him, but by a conſtant view of him and his Glory by faith which powerfully and effectually works them in us. All the *Doctrinal Knowledge* which we have of him is uſeleſs; all the view we have of his Glory is but Fancy, Imagination or Superſtition, which are not accompanied with this *transforming Power*. And that which is wrought by it, is the encreaſe and vigor of all Grace; for therein alone our Conformity unto him doth conſiſt. Growth in Grace, Holineſs and Obedience, is a *growing like unto Chriſt*, and nothing elſe is ſo.

I cannot refrain here from a neceſſary ſhort *Digreſſion*. This *transforming efficacy* from a ſpiritual View of Chriſt as propoſed in the Goſpel, being loſt as unto an expeperience of it in the Minds of Men carnal and ignorant of the myſtery of believing (as it is at preſent by many derided, tho it be the life of Religion) *Fancy* and *Superſtition* provided various ſupplies in the room of it. For they found out *Crucifixes* and *Images* with *Paintings* to repreſent him in his Sufferings and Glory. By theſe things, their carnal Affections being excited by their outward Senſes, they ſuppoſe themſelves to be affected with him,

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and to be like unto him. Yea, ſome have proceeded ſo far, as either by *Arts Diabolical*, or by other means, to make an appearance of *wounds on their hands, and feet, and ſides*, therein pretending to be like him; yea, to be wholly transformed into his *Image*. But that which is produced by an Image, is but an Image, an imaginary Chriſt will effect nothing in the Minds of Men, but imaginary Grace.

THUS Religion was loſt and died. When Men could not obtain any *experience* in their Minds of the ſpiritual Myſteries of the Goſpel, nor be ſenſible of any ſpiritual Change or Advantage by them, they ſubſtituted ſome outward Duties and Obſervances in their ſtead; as I ſhall ſhew (God willing) elſewhere more at large. Theſe produced ſome kind of effects on their Minds and Affections, but quite of another nature than thoſe which are the real effects of true *Evangelical* Grace. This is openly evident in this ſubſtitution of *Images* inſtead of the repreſentation of Chriſt and his Glory made in the Goſpel.

HOWEVER there is a general Suppoſition granted on all hands; namely, that there muſt be a *View of Chriſt*, and *his Glory*, to cauſe us to love him, and thereby to make us conformable or like unto him. But here lies the difference; thoſe of the *Church of Rome* ſay that this muſt be done by the beholding of *Crucifixes* with other Images and Pictures of him; and that with our bodily eyes: We ſay it is, by our beholding his Glory by Faith, as revealed in the Goſpel, and no otherwiſe. And to confeſs the Truth, we have ſome, who as they reject the *uſe of Images*, ſo they deſpiſe that ſpiritual View of the Glory of Chriſt which we enquire after. Such Perſons on the firſt occaſion will fall on the other ſide; For any thing is better than nothing.

BUT

BUT as we have a ſure word of Propheſie to ſecure us from theſe abominations by an expreſs prohibition of ſuch Images unto all ends whatever; ſo unto our ſtability in the profeſſion of the Truth, and *experience* of the efficacy of this Spiritual View of Chriſt *transforming* our Souls into his own likeneſs, is abſolutely neceſſary. For if an *Idolater* ſhould plead, as they do all, that in the beholding of the *Image of Chriſt*, or of a *Crucifix*, eſpecially if they are aſſiduous and conſtant therein, they find their Affections unto him greatly excited, increaſed, and inflamed (as they will be, *Iſa.* 57. 5.) and that hereon he endeavours to be like unto him, what ſhall we have to oppoſe thereunto? For it is certain that ſuch *Images* are apt to make impreſſions on the Minds of Men; partly from the readineſs of the ſenſes and imagination to give them admittance into their thoughts; and partly from their natural inclinations unto ſuperſtition, their averſation from things ſpiritual and inviſible, with an inclination unto things preſent and viſible. Hence among them who are ſatisfied that they ought not to be adored with any *Religious Veneration*, yet ſome are apt upon the ſight of them to entertain a *thoughtful Reverence*, as they would do if they were to enter into a *Pagan Temple* full of Idols; and others are continually making approaches towards their uſe and veneration in *Paintings and Altars* and ſuch outward poſtures of Worſhip as are uſed in the Religious Service of them. But that they do ſenſibly affect the Minds of Men carnal and ſuperſtitious, cannot be denyed, and as they ſuppoſe, it is a love unto Chriſt himſelf. However, certain it is in general, and confeſſed on all hands, that the *beholding of Chriſt* is the moſt bleſſed means of exciting all our Graces, ſpiritualizing all our Affections, and transforming our Minds into his likeneſs. And if we have not another, and that a more excellent way of *beholding him*, than they have who behold him,

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as they ſuppoſe, in Images and Crucifixes, they would ſeem to have the advantage of us. For their Minds will really be affected with ſomewhat, ours with nothing at all. And by the pretence thereof, they inveagle the carnal affections of Men ignorant of the Power of the Goſpel, to become their *Proſelytes*. For having lived, it may be, a long time without any the leaſt experience of a ſenſible impreſſion on their Minds, or a transforming power from the Repreſentation of Chriſt in the Goſpel, upon their very firſt Religious, Devout, Application unto theſe Images, they find their Thoughts exerciſed, their Minds affected, and ſome preſent change made upon them.

BUT there was a difference between the *Perſon of David*, and an *Image with a bolſter of Goats Hair*, though the one were laid in the room and place of the other. And there is ſo between Chriſt and an Image, though the one be put into the place of the other. Neither do theſe things ſerve unto any other end, but to divert the Minds of Men from Faith and Love to Chriſt; giving them ſome ſuch ſatisfactions in the room of them, as that their carnal Affections do cleave unto their Idols. And indeed it doth belong unto the Wiſdom of Faith, or we ſtand in need of ſpiritual Light, to diſcern and judge between the working of natural Affections towards ſpiritual Objects, on undue motives, by undue means, with indirect ends, wherein all *Papal Devotion* conſiſts, and the ſpiritual Exerciſe of Grace in thoſe Affections duely fixed on ſpiritual Objects.

BUT as was ſaid, it is a real experience of the *Efficacy*, that there is in the ſpiritual *beholding of the Glory of Chriſt by Faith* as propoſed in the Goſpel, to ſtrengthen, encreaſe and excite all Grace unto its proper exerciſe, ſo changing and transforming the Soul gradually into his likeneſs, which muſt ſecure us againſt all thoſe Pretences; and ſo I return from this *Digreſſion*.

HEREBY we may understand whether the Lord Christ doth so *withdraw himself*, as that we do not, as that we cannot behold his glory by Faith in a due manner, which is the thing enquired after. For if we grow *weak in our Graces*, unspiritual in our Frames, cold in our Affections, or negligent in the exercise of them by holy Meditation, it is evident that he is at a great distance from us, so as that we do not *behold his Glory* as we ought. If the weather grow cold, Herbs and Plants do whither, and the Frost begins to bind up the earth, all men grant that the *Sun* is withdrawn, and makes not its wonted approach unto us. And if it be so with our Hearts, that they grow *cold*, *frozen*, *withering*, *lifeless* in and unto spiritual Duties, it is certain that the Lord Christ is in some sence withdrawn, and that we do not behold his Glory. We retain *Notions* of Truth concerning his Person, Office and Grace; but faith is not in constant exercise, as to real views of him and his Glory. For there is nothing more certain in Christian Experience than this is, that while we do really by Faith behold the Glory of Christ, as proposed in the Gospel, the Glory of his Person and Office as before described, and so abide in Holy Thoughts and Meditations thereof, especially in our private Duties and Retirements, *all Grace* will live and thrive in us in some measure, especially love unto his Person, and therein unto all that belongs unto him. Let us but put it to the trial, and we shall infallibly find the promised event.

DO any of us find *decays in Grace* prevailing in us; deadness, coldness, lukewarmness, a kind of Spiritual Stupidity and senselessness coming upon us? Do we find an unreadiness unto the exercise of Grace in its proper season, and the vigorous actings of it in Duties of Communion with God? And would we have our souls recovered from these dangerous diseases? Let us assure our selves there is *no better* way for our healing and deliverance, yea

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no other way but this alone, namely the *obtaining a fresh view of the Glory of Christ by faith, and a steady abiding therein.* Constant contemplation of Christ and his Glory putting forth its transforming power unto the revival of all Grace, is the only relief in this case, as shall further be shewed afterwards.

SOME will say, that this must be effected by *fresh supplies and renewed communications of the Holy Spirit.* Unless he fall as dew and showers on our dry and barren hearts, unless he causeth our Graces to spring, thrive and bring forth fruit, unless he revive and increase faith, love and holiness in our souls, our *backslidings* will not be healed, nor our spiritual state be recovered. Unto this end is he prayed for, and promised in the Scripture, see *Cant.* 4. 16. *Isa.* 44. 3, 4 *Ezek.* 11. 19. *chap.* 36. 26. *Hos.* 14. 5, 6. And so it is. The immediate efficiency of the revival of our souls, is from and by the Holy Spirit. But the enquiry is, in *what way*, or by *what means*, we may obtain the supplies and communications of him unto this end? This the Apostle declares in the place insisted on; *We beholding the Glory of Christ in a Glass, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.* It is in the exercise of Faith on Christ in the way before described, that the Holy Spirit puts forth his renewing, transforming Power in and upon our souls. This therefore is that alone which will retrive Christians from their present decays and deadness.

SOME *complain* greatly of their State and Condition; none so dead, so dull and stupid as they. They know not whether they have any spark of heavenly life left in them; some make weak and faint endeavours for a recovery, which are like the attempts of a man in a dream wherein he seems to use great endeavours without any success. Some put themselves unto multiplied duties. Howbeit the *Generallity of Professors* seem to be in a pining

thriftleſs condition. And the reaſon of it is, becauſe they will not ſincerely and conſtantly make uſe of the only remedy and relief; like a man that will rather chuſe to pine away in his ſickneſs, with ſome uſeleſs, tranſient refreſhments, than apply himſelf unto a known and approved remedy, becauſe it may be the uſe of it is unſuited unto ſome of his preſent occaſions. Now this is to live in the exerciſe of Faith in Chriſt Jeſus: This himſelf aſſures us of, Joh. 15. 4, 5. *Abide in me, and I in you; As the branch cannot bear fruit of it ſelf except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except you abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.*

THERE is a twofold *coming unto Chriſt* by believing. The firſt is that *we may have life*; that is, a ſpring and principle of ſpiritual life communicated unto us from him, *for he is our life*, Col. 3. 3. and *becauſe he liveth, we live alſo*, Joh. 14. 19. Yea, it is not ſo much *we that live, as he liveth in us*, Gal. 2. 19, 20. And unbelief is a *not coming unto him*, that we may have life, Joh. 5. 40. But ſecondly, there is alſo a coming unto him by believers in the actual exerciſe of Faith, that they may *have this life more abundantly*, Joh. 10. 10. That is, ſuch ſupplies of Grace as may keep their ſouls in a healthy, vigorous acting of all the powers of ſpiritual life. And as he reproacheth ſome that they would not *come unto him that they might* have *life*, ſo he may juſtly reprove us all, that we do not *ſo come unto him* in the actual exerciſe of Faith as that we might *have this life more abundantly*.

SECONDLY; When the Lord Chriſt is near us, and we do behold his Glory, he will frequently communicate *ſpiritual refreſhment* in peace, conſolation, and joy unto our ſouls. We ſhall not only hereby have our graces excited with reſpect unto him as their object, but be

be made ſenſible of his actings *towards us* in the communications of himſelf and his love unto us. When the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſeth on any ſoul, or makes any near approach thereunto, it ſhall find *healing under his Wings*; his beams of Grace ſhall convey by his ſpirit, holy ſpiritual refreſhment thereunto. For he is preſent with us by his ſpirit, and theſe are his fruits and effects as he is the Comforter, ſuited unto his Office as he is promiſed unto us.

MANY love to walk in a very careleſs unwiſe profeſſion. So long as they can hold out in the performance of outward duties, they are very regardleſs of the greateſt Evangelical Priviledges; of thoſe things which are the marrow of divine Promiſes, all real endeavours of a vital communion with Chriſt. Such are ſpiritual peace, refreſhing conſolations, ineffable joys, and the bleſſed compoſure of aſſurance. Without ſome taſte and experience of theſe things, profeſſion is heartleſs, lifeleſs, uſeleſs; and Religion it ſelf a dead carcaſs without an animating ſoul. The peace which ſome enjoy, is a meer ſtupidity. They judge not theſe things to be real, which are the ſubſtance of Chriſts preſent reward; and a renunciation whereof would deprive the Church of its principal ſupportments and encouragements in all its ſufferings. It is a great evidence of the power of unbelief, when we can ſatisfie our ſelves without an experience in our own hearts of the great things in this kind of *Joy, Peace, Conſolation, Aſſurance*, that are promiſed in the Goſpel. For how can it be ſuppoſed that we do indeed believe the promiſes of things future, namely, of Heaven, Immortality and Glory, the faith whereof is the foundation of all Religion, when we do not believe the promiſes of the *preſent reward*, in theſe ſpiritual Priviledges. And how ſhall we be thought to believe them, when we do not endeavour after an experience

perience of the things themſelves in our own ſouls, but are even contented without them? But herein men deceive themſelves. They would very deſirouſly have evangelical Joy, Peace and Aſſurance to countenance them in their evil frames, and careleſs walking. And ſome have attempted to reconcile theſe things unto the ruin of their ſouls. But it will not be. Without the diligent exerciſe of the Grace of Obedience, we ſhall never enjoy the Grace of Conſolation. But we muſt ſpeak ſomewhat of theſe things afterwards.

IT is peculiarly, in the *view of the Glory of Chriſt*, in his approaches unto us, and abiding with us, that we are made Partakers of Evangelical Peace, Conſolation, Joy and Aſſurance. Theſe are a part of the Royal Train of his Graces, of the Reward wherewith he is accompanied; *His reward is with him.* Wherever he is graciouſly preſent with any, theſe things are never wanting in a due meaſure and degree, unleſs it be by their own fault, or for their trial. In theſe things doth he give the Church of his loves, Cant. 7. 12. For *if any man* (ſaith he) *loveth me, I will love him, and manifeſt my ſelf unto him*, Joh. 14. 21. *Yea, I and the Father will come unto him and make our abode with him*, *v.* 23. and that ſo as to *ſup with him*, Rev. 3. 20. which on his part, can be only by the Communication of thoſe ſpiritual refreſhments. The only enquiry is by what *way* and *means* we do receive them? Now I ſay this is in and by our *beholding of the Glory of Chriſt by Faith*, 1 Per. 1. 9, 10. Let that Glory be rightly ſtated as before laid down; the Glory of his Perſon, his Office, his Condeſcention, Exaltation, Love and Grace; let Faith be fixed in a view and contemplation of it, mix it ſelf with it as repreſented in the Glaſs of the Goſpel, meditate upon it, embrace it, and virtue will proceed from Chriſt, communicating ſpiritual, ſupernatural refreſhment

freſhment and joy unto our ſouls. Yea, in ordinary caſes it is impoſſible that believers ſhould have a *real proſpect of this Glory* at any time, but that it will in ſome meaſure affect their hearts with a ſenſe of his love, which is the ſpring of all conſolation in them. In the exerciſe of Faith on the diſcoveries of the Glory of Chriſt made unto us in the Goſpel, no man ſhall ever totally want ſuch intimations of his Love, yea, ſuch effuſions of it in his heart, as ſhall be a living ſpring of thoſe ſpiritual refreſhments, *Joh.* 4. 14. *Rom.* 5. 5. When therefore we loſe theſe things as unto a ſenſe of them in our ſouls, it is evident that the Lord Chriſt is withdrawn, and that we do not behold his Glory.

BUT I cannot here avoid another ſhort digreſſion. There are thoſe by whom all theſe things are derided as diſtempered fancies and imaginations. Yea, ſuch things have been ſpoken and written of them, as contain a virtual renunciation of the Goſpel, the powers of the World to come and the whole work of the Holy Ghoſt as the comforter of the Church. And hereby all real entercourſe between the *Perſon of Chriſt*, and the ſouls of them that do believe, is utterly overthrown; reducing all Religion to an outward ſhew and a pageantry, fitter for a ſtage, than that Temple of God which is in the minds of men. According unto the ſentiments of theſe *prophane ſcoffers*, there is no ſuch thing as the *ſhedding abroad of the love of God in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt*; nor as the *witneſſing of the ſpirit of God with our ſpirits, that we are the Children of God*; from which theſe ſpiritual joys and refreſhments are inſeparable, as their neceſſary effects. No ſuch thing, as the *lifting up of the Light of Gods countenance upon us, which will put gladneſs into our hearts*; that gladneſs which comprizeth all the things mentioned; No ſuch thing as *rejoycing upon Believing with joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*; no ſuch thing as *Chriſts ſhewing and manifeſting himſelf unto*

us, supping with us, and *giving us of his loves*; that the divine promises of a *feast of fat things, and Wine well refined* in Gospel-Mercies, are empty and insignificant words; that all those ravishing joys and exultations of spirit that multitudes of faithful *Martyrs* of old, and in later ages have enjoyed by a view of the Glory of God in Christ and a sense of his love, whereunto they gave testimony unto their last moments in the midst of their torments, were but fancies and Imaginations. But it is the height of impudence in these profane scoffers, that they proclaim their own Ignorance of those things which are the real powers of our Religion.

OTHERS there are, who will not *deny the truth* of these things. They dare not rise up in contradiction unto those express Testimonies of the Scripture, wherewith they are confirmed. And they do suppose that some are partakers of them, at least they were so *formerly*; but as for their parts, they have no experience of them, nor do judge it their duty to endeavour after it. They can make a shift to live on hopes of Heaven and future Glory: As unto what is present they desire no more, but to be found in the performance of some duties in answer unto their convictions, which gives them that sorry peace which they do enjoy. So do many countenance themselves in their spiritual sloth and unbelief, keeping themselves at liberty to seek for refreshment and satisfaction in other things, whilst those of the Gospel are despised. And these things are inconsistent. While men look for their *chief refreshment* and satisfaction in temporal things, it is impossible they should seek after those that are spiritual in a due manner. And it must be confessed, that when we have a due regard unto spiritual, evangelical Consolations and Joys, it will abate and take off our affections unto, and satisfaction in present enjoyments, *Phil.* 3 8, 9.

BUT

BUT there is no more ſacred truth than this; That where Chriſt is preſent with Believers, where he is not withdrawn for a ſeaſon from them, where they live in the view of his Glory by faith as it is propoſed unto them in the Goſpel, he will give unto them at his own ſeaſons ſuch intimations of his love, ſuch ſupplies of his ſpirit, ſuch holy joys and rejoycings, ſuch repoſe of ſoul in aſſurance, as ſhall refreſh their ſouls, fill them with joy, ſatisfie them with ſpiritual delight, and quicken them unto all acts of holy Communion with himſelf.

LET no ſuch *diſhonour* be reflected on the Goſpel, that whereas the faith of it, and obedience unto it, are uſually accompanied with outward Troubles, Afflictions, Perſecution and Reproaches, as we are foretold they ſhould be, that it doth not by its inward conſolations and divine refreſhments, outballance all thoſe evils which we may undergo upon the account of it. So to ſuppoſe, is expreſly contrary to the promiſe of Chriſt himſelf who hath aſſured that even νῦν ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ *even now in this life*, in this world, diſtinct from eternal life; in the world to come, *we ſhall receive an hundred-fold recompence* for all that we can loſe or ſuffer for his his ſake, Mat. 10. 30. as alſo unto the experience of them who in all ages have *taken joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, as knowing in themſelves* (by the experience which they have of its firſt fruits) *that they have in heaven a better and more abiding ſubſtance*, Heb. 10. 29, 30. If we come ſhort in a participation of theſe things, if we are ſtrangers unto them, the blame is to be laid on our ſelves alone, as it ſhall be immediately declared.

NOW the deſign of the Lord Chriſt in thus *withdrawing* himſelf from us, and *hiding his glory* from our view, being the exerciſe of our Graces, and to ſtir us up unto diligence in our enquiries after him, here lieth our guidance and direction in this caſe. Do we find our ſelves

lifeleſs in the ſpiritual duties of Religion? Are we ſtrangers unto the heavenly viſits of conſolation and joys, thoſe *viſitations of God* whereby he preſerves our ſouls? Do we ſeldom enjoy a ſenſe of the *ſhedding abroad of his love in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt*? We have no way of Recovery but this alone. To this *ſtrong Tower* muſt we turn our ſelves as *Priſoners of hope*; unto Chriſt muſt we look that we may be ſaved. It is a ſteady view or contemplation of his Glory by faith alone, that will bring in all theſe things in a lively experience in our hearts and ſouls.

AGAIN; In the *ſecond place*, it is from *our ſelves* principally, if we loſe the views of the Glory of Chriſt, and the exerciſe of faith be obſtructed therein. All our ſpiritual diſadvantages do ariſe from our ſelves. It is the remainder of luſts and corruptions in us, either indulged by ſloth and negligence, or excited and inflamed by Satan's Temptations, that do obſtruct us in this duty. Whilſt they are in any diſorder or diſturbance, it is in vain for us to expect any clear view of this Glory.

THAT view of the Glory of Chriſt, whereof we treat, conſiſts in two things; namely, its *eſpecial Nature*, and its neceſſary *Adjunct* or effect. The firſt is, a *ſpiritual perception or underſtanding of it as revealed in the Scriptures*. For the revelation of the Glory of his Perſon, Office and Grace, is the Principal Subject of them, and the principal Object of our Faith. And the other conſiſts in *multiplied thoughts about him*, with actings of Faith in Love, Truſt, Delight, and longing after the the full enjoyment of him, 1 Pet. 1. 8. If we ſatisfie our ſelves in meer notions and ſpeculations about the Glory of Chriſt as doctrinally revealed unto us, we ſhall find no transforming power or efficacy communicated unto us thereby. But when under the conduct of that ſpiritual Light our affections do cleave unto him with full purpoſe of heart,

our

our minds are filled with thoughts of him, and delight in him, and faith is kept up unto its constant exercise in Trust and Affiance on him, virtue will proceed from him to purifie our hearts, increase our holiness, strengthen our Graces, and to *fill us* sometimes *with joy unspeakable and full of Glory*. This is the just temperature of a state of spiritual health; namely, when our *Light* of the knowledge of the Glory of God in Christ, doth answer the *means* of it which we enjoy; and when our *Affections* unto Christ do hold proportion unto that light; and this according unto the various degrees of it; for some have more, and some have less. Where *Light* leaves the *Affections* behind, it ends in Formality or Atheism: And where *Affections* outrun *Light* they sink in the Bog of Superstition, doting on Images and Pictures or the like. But where things go not into these excesses, it is better that our affections exceed our light on the defect of our understandings, than that our light exceed our affections from the corruption of our wills. In both these is the exercise of faith frequently interrupted and obstructed by the remainder of corruption in us, especially if not kept constantly under the *discipline of Mortification*, but some way indulged unto. For,

1. THE *steam of their disorder* will cloud and darken the understanding, that it shall not be able clearly to discern any spiritual object, least of all the greatest of them. There is nothing more acknowledged even in things natural and moral than that the disorder of the passions and affections will blind, darken, and deceive the mind in its Operations. And it is much more so in things *spiritual*, wherein that Disorder is an immediate Rebellion against its proper conducting Light; that is, against the Light and Rule of Grace.

THERE

THERE are three ſorts of them unto whom the Goſpel is preached, in whom there are various Obſtructions of this view.

1. THERE is in obſtinate unbelievers a darkneſs that is an effect of the power of Satan on their minds, in blinding of them, which makes it impoſſible for them to behold any thing of the Glory of Chriſt. So the Apoſtle declares it, *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid unto them that are loſt, in whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them*, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. Of theſe we do not ſpeak.

2. THERE is in all men, a *corrupt, natural darkneſs*; or ſuch a depravation of their minds by nature, as that they cannot diſcern this Glory of Chriſt in a due manner. Hence *the Light ſhineth in darkneſs and the darkneſs comprehendeth it not*, John. 1.5. For the *natural man receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. Hence it is that although Chriſt be preached among us continually, yet there are very few who diſcern any Glory or Beauty in him, for which *he ſhould be deſired*, as the Prophet complains, *Iſa.* 53. 1, 2. But I ſpeak not of this *natural darkneſs* in general. But even theſe perſons have their minds filled with prejudices againſt the Goſpel and darkned as unto the Glory of Chriſt according as corrupt luſts and affections are prevalent in them, ſee Joh. 1. 44. *chap.* 12. 43. Hence is the difference that is among the common hearers of the word. For although no man can do any thing of himſelf for the receiving of Chriſt, and the beholding of his Glory, without the eſpecial aid of the Grace of God, Mat. 11. 24 John. 6. 44, 45; Yet ſome may make more oppoſition unto believing, and lay more hindrances in their own way, than others; which is done by their luſts and corruptions.

THERE

3. THERE are those in whom both these evils are cured by faith, wherein the eyes of our *understandings are enlightened* to perceive and discern spiritual things, *Ephes.* 1. 16, 17, 18. But this cure is wrought in this life but in part, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. And in this cure by a supply of a principle of saving light unto our minds, there are many degrees. For some have a clearer light than others, and thereby a more clear discerning of the Mystery of the Wisdom of God, and of the Glory of Christ therein. But whatever be our attainments herein, that which obstructs this light, that hinders it from shining in a due manner, *that* obstructs and hinders faith in its view of the Glory of Christ. And this is done by the *remainders of corrupted nature* in us, when they act in any prevalent degree. For they darken the mind and weaken it in its spiritual Operations. That is, where any corrupt and inordinate affections, as love of the world, cares about it, inclinations unto sensuality, or the like spiritual disorders do prevail, faith is weakened in its spiritual acts, especially in discerning and beholding the Glory of Christ. For the mind is rendred *unsteady* in its enquiries after it, being continually distracted and diverted with vain thoughts and Imaginations.

PERSONS under the Power of such Distempers may have the same *doctrinal knowledge* of the Person of Christ his Office and his grace with other men, and the same evidence of its Truth fixed on their minds; but when they endeavour a real *intuition* into the things themselves, all things are *dark* and confused unto them from the uncertainty and instability of their own minds.

THIS is the sum of what I do design. We have by Faith a View of the Glory of Christ. This View is weak and unsteady from the Nature of Faith it self, and the way of its proposal unto us as in a *Glass*, in comparison of what by *Sight* we shall attain unto. But moreover,

over, where corrupt Lusts or inordinate Affections are indulged unto, where they are not continually *mortified*, where any one sin hath a perplexing prevalency in the Mind, Faith will be so far weakened thereby, as that it can neither see nor meditate upon this Glory of Christ in a due manner. This is the Reason why the most are so weak and unstable in the performance of this Duty, yea are almost utterly unacquainted with it. The Light of Faith in the Minds of Men being impaired, clouded, darkned by the prevalency of unmortified Lusts, it cannot make such discoveries of this Glory, as otherwise it would do. And this makes the preaching of Christ unto many so unprofitable as it is.

SECONDLY; In the View of the Glory of Christ which we have by Faith, it will fill the Mind with *Thoughts and Meditations* about him, whereon the affections will cleave unto him with delight. This, as was said, is inseparable from a spiritual View of his Glory in its due exercise. Every one that hath it, must and will have many *Thoughts* concerning, and great affections to him. See the description of these things, *Phil.* 3. 8, 10. It is not possible, I say, that we should behold the Glory of his Person, Office and Grace, with a due conviction of our concernment and interest therein, but that our Minds will be greatly affected with it, and be filled with contemplations about it. Where it is not so with any, it is to be feared that they *have not heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape*, whatever they profess. A spiritual sight of Christ will assuredly produce love unto him, and if any Man love him not, he never saw him, he knows him not at all. And that is no love, which doth not beget in us many *thoughts* of the object beloved. He therefore who is partaker of this Grace, will think much of what Christ is in himself, of what he hath done for us, of his love and condescention, of the manifestation

of

of all the glorious excellencies of the Divine Nature in him, exerted in a way of infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs for the Salvation of the Church. Thoughts and Meditations of theſe things will abound in us, if we are not wanting unto the due exerciſe of Faith: and intenſe inflamed Affections unto him, will enſue thereon, at leaſt they will be active unto our own refreſhing experience. And where theſe things are not in reality (though in ſome they may be only in a mean and low degree) Men do but deceive their own Souls in hopes of any benefit by Chriſt or the Goſpel.

THIS therefore is the preſent caſe. Where there are prevailing ſinful Diſtempers or inordinate Affections in the Mind, ſuch as thoſe before mentioned, as Self-love, love of the World, cares and fears about it, with an exceſſive valuation of relations and enjoyments; they will ſo far cumber and perplex it with a multitude of thoughts about their own Objects, as ſhall leave no place for ſedate Meditations on Chriſt and his Glory. And where the thoughts are engaged, the Affections which partly excite them, and partly are led by them, will be fixed alſo, *Col.* 3. 1, 2.

THIS is that which in the moſt, greatly promoteth that *imperfection*, which is in our View of the Glory of Chriſt, by Faith in this Life. According to the proportion and degree of the prevalency of Affections, corrupt, earthly, ſelfiſh or ſenſual, filling the Heads and Hearts of Men with a multitude of thoughts about what they are fixed on, or inclined unto; ſo is Faith obſtructed and weakened in this Work and Duty.

WHEREFORE, whereas there is a remainder of theſe Luſts, as to the Seeds of them in us all, tho more mortified in ſome than in others; yet having the ſame effects in the minds of all, according to the Degree of their remainder; thence it is as from an Efficacious cauſe of it,

that

that our View of the Glory of Christ by Faith, is in many so weak, imperfect and unsteady.

THIRDLY, We have interruption given unto the work of Faith herein, by the *Temptations of Satan.* His original great design, wherever the Gospel is preached, is to *blind the Eyes of Men, that the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should not shine unto them, or irradiate* their Minds, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. And herein he prevails unto astonishment. Let the Light of the Gospel in the preaching of the Word be never so glorious; yet by various means and artifices, he blinds the Minds of the most, that they shall not behold any thing of the Glory of Christ therein. By this means he continues his rule in the Children of Disobedience. With respect unto the Elect, God overpowers him herein. He *shines into their Hearts to give them the Knowledge of his Glory in the face of Christ Jesus*, vers. 6. Yet will not Satan so give over. He will endeavour by all ways and means to trouble, discompose, and *darken* the mind even of them that believe, so as that they shall not be able to retain clear and distinct Views of this Glory. And this he doth two ways.

1. WITH some he imploys all his Engines, useth all his Methods of Serpentine Subtilty, and casts in his fiery Darts, so to disquiet, discompose and deject them, as that they can retain no comfortable Views of Christ or his Glory. Hence arise fears, doubts, disputes, uncertainties, with various Disconsolations. Hereon they cannot apprehend the Love of Christ, nor be sensible of any Interest they have therein, or any refreshing perswasions that they are accepted with him. If such things sometimes shine and beam into their Minds, yet they quickly vanish and disappear. Fears that they are rejected and cast off by him, that he will not receive them here nor hereafter, do come in their place; hence are they filled with Anxieties and Despondencies, under which it is impossible

poſſible they ſhould have any clear View of his Glory.

I KNOW that *Ignorance*, *Atheiſm* and *Obſtinate Security* in ſenſual Sins, do combine to deſpiſe all theſe things. But it is no new thing in the World, that Men outwardly profeſſing Chriſtian Religion, when they find gain in that Godlineſs, ſhould ſpeak evil of the things which they know not, and corrupt themſelves in what they know naturally, as bruit Beaſts.

2. WITH others he deals after another manner. By various means he ſeduceth them into a *careleſs Security* wherein they promiſe Peace unto themſelves without any diligent ſearch into theſe things. Hereon they live in a general preſumption that they ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt, although they know not how. This makes the Apoſtle ſo earneſt in preſſing the Duty of ſelf-examination on all Chriſtians, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves whether you be in the Faith: prove your own ſelves: know you not your own ſelves that Chriſt is in you, except you be reprobates?* The Rule of Self-judging preſcribed by him, is *whether Chriſt be in us or no*; and in us he cannot be, unleſs he be received by that Faith wherewith we behold his Glory. For by Faith we receive him, and by Faith he dwelleth in our hearts. *Joh.* 1. 12. *Eph.* 3. 17.

THIS is the principal way of his prevailing in the World. Multitudes by his Seduction live in great *ſecurity* under the utmoſt neglect of theſe things. Security is granted to be an Evil deſtructive of the Souls of Men; but then it is ſuppoſed to conſiſt only in Impenitency for great and open Sins; but to be neglective of endeavouring an experience of the Power and Grace of the Goſpel in our own Souls, under a Profeſſion of Religion, is no leſs deſtructive and pernicious, than impenitency in any courſe of ſin.

THESE and the like Obſtructions unto Faith in its Operations being added unto its own imperfections, are another cauſe whence our View of the Glory of Chriſt in

this World is *weak* and *unsteady*; so that for the most part it doth but transiently affect our Minds, and not so fully transform them into his likeness, as otherwise it would.

IT is now time to consider, that sight which we shall have of the Glory of Christ in Heaven, in comparison of that which we have here below. Now this is *equal*, *stable*, *always the same without interruption or diversion*. And this is evident, both in the causes or means of it, as also in our perfect Deliverance from every thing that might be an hindrance in it, or an obstruction unto it.

1. WE may consider the *state of our minds* in Glory. The faculties of our Souls shall then be made perfect, Heb. 12. *The Spirits of just Men made perfect.* (1.) Freed from all the clogs of the flesh, and all its influence upon them, and restraint of their Powers in their Operations. (2.) Perfectly purified from all Principles of instability and variety; of all Inclinations unto things Sensual and Carnal, and all Contrivances of Self-preservation or Advancement, being wholly transformed into the Image of God, in spirituality and holiness. And to take in the state of our *Bodies* after the Resurrection; even they also in all their Powers and Senses, shall be made entirely subservient unto the most spiritual actings of our Minds in their highest Elevation by the Light of Glory. Hereby shall we be enabled and fitted eternally to abide in the Contemplation of the Glory of Christ, with joy and satisfaction. The understanding shall be always perfected with the Vision of God, and the Affections cleave inseparably to him; which is Blessedness.

THE very *essential faculties* of our Souls in that way and manner of working, which by their Union with our Bodies they are confined unto, are not able to comprehend and abide constantly in the Contemplation of this Glory. So that, though our sight of it here be dim and imperfect, and the proposal of it obscure; yet from the weakness of our minds, we are forced sometimes to turn

aſide from what we do diſcern, as we do our bodily eyes from the beams of the Sun, when it ſhines in its brightneſs. But in this perfect State they are able to behold and delight in this Glory conſtantly, with eternal ſatisfaction.

BUT as for me (ſaith David) *I will behold thy face in Righteouſneſs; I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake, with thy likeneſs*, Pſal. 17. 15. It is Chriſt alone, who is the *Likeneſs* and *Image* of God. When we *awake* in the *other World*, with our Minds purified and rectified, the beholding of him ſhall be always ſatisfying unto us. There will be there no Satiety, no Wearineſs, no Indiſpoſitions; but the Mind being made perfect in all its faculties, powers and operations, with reſpect unto its utmoſt end, which is the enjoyment of God, is ſatisfied in the beholding of him for evermore. And where there is perfect ſatisfaction without Satiety, there is bleſſedneſs for ever. So the Holy Spirit affirms of the *four living Creatures* in the Revelation; *They reſt not day nor night, ſaying, holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty*, Chap. 4. 8. They are continually exerciſed in the Admiration and Praiſes of God in Chriſt, without wearineſs or interruption. Herein ſhall we be made *like unto Angels*.

2. AS our Minds in their *eſſential powers* and Faculties ſhall be enabled to comprehend and acquieſce in this Glory of Chriſt, ſo the *means* or *inſtrument* of the beholding of it, is much more excellent than *Faith*, and in its kind abſolutely perfect, as hath in part been before declared. This is *viſion* or *ſight*. Here we walk by *Faith*, there by *Sight*. And this *Sight* is not an *external aid*, like a Glaſs helping the weakneſs of the *viſive faculty* to ſee things afar off; but it is an *internal power*, or an act of the internal power of our Minds, wherewith they are endowed in a glorified ſtate. Hereby we ſhall be able to *ſee him face to face, to ſee him as he is*, in a direct comprehenſion of his Glory; for this ſight or viſive power ſhall

do. Hereunto the whole Glory of Christ is clear, perspicuous and evident, which will give us eternal Acquiescency therein. Hence shall our sight of the Glory of Christ be *invariable*, and always the same.

2. THE Lord Christ will never in any *one instance*, on *any occasion*, so much as one moment *withdraw himself* from us, or Eclipse the proposal and manifestation of himself unto our sight. This he doth sometimes in this life, and it is needful for us that so he should do. *We shall be ever with the Lord*, 1 *Thes.* 4. 17. without end, without interruption. This is the Center of good and evil, as to the future different states of Men. *They shall be for ever.* Eternity makes them absolutely good on the one hand, and absolutely evil on the other. To be in *Hell* under the wrath of God, is in it self the greatest penal Evil: But to be there *for ever*, without the Intermission of Misery, or Determination of Time, is that which renders it the greatest evil unto them who shall be in that condition. So is *Eternity* the Life of future Blessedness. We shall be *ever with the Lord*, without Limitation of Time, without Interruption of Enjoyment.

THERE are no vicissitudes in the heavenly state. The New *Hierusalem* hath no Temple in it, *for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple thereof*, Revel. 21. 24. There is no need of instituted means of Worship, nor of Ordinances of Divine Service. For we shall need neither encrease of Grace, nor Excitations unto its exercise. The constant, immediate, uninterrupted enjoyment of God and the Lamb, supplieth all. And it hath *no need of the Sun, nor of the Moon to shine in it; for the Glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof.* The Light of the Sun is excellent; howbeit, it hath its Seasons, after it hath shone in its brightest Lustre, it gives place to the night and darkness. So is the Light of the *Moon* of great use in the Night; but it hath its Seasons also. Such is the Light we have of the Glory of God

and the Lamb in this World. Sometimes it is as the Light of the *Sun*, which under the Goſpel is *ſeven fold*, as the *Light of Seven Days* in one, in compariſon of the Law, *Iſa.* 30. 26. Sometimes as the Light of the *Moon*, which giveth relief in the Night of Temptations and Trials. But it is not conſtant; we are under a viciſſitude of Light and Darkneſs, Views of Chriſt, and a loſs of him. But in Heaven the perpetual preſence of Chriſt with his Saints, makes it always *one Noon* of Light and Glory.

3. THIS *Viſion* is not in the leaſt liable unto any weaknings from *internal defects*, nor any *aſſaults from Temptations*, as is the *ſight* of Faith in this Life. No Doubts or Fears, no diſturbing Darts or Injections ſhall there have any place. There ſhall no Habit, no Quality, no Inclination or Diſpoſition remain in our Souls, but what ſhall eternally lead us unto the Contemplation of the Glory of Chriſt, with delight and complacency. Nor will there be any defect in the gracious Powers of our Souls, as unto a perpetual exerciſe of them; and as unto all other *oppoſing Enemies*, we ſhall be in a perpetual triumph over them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56, 57. The mouth of iniquity ſhall be ſtopped for ever, and the voice of the ſelf avenger ſhall be heard no more.

WHEREFORE the *Viſion* which we ſhall have in Heaven of the Glory of Chriſt, is *Serene*; always the ſame, always new and indeficient, wherein nothing can diſturb the Mind in the moſt perfect Operations of a bleſſed Life. And when all the faculties of the Soul can without any internal weakneſs or external hindrances exerciſe their moſt perfect operations on the moſt perfect Object; therein lies all the *bleſſedneſs* which our nature is capable of.

WHEREFORE, whenever in this life we attain any comfortable refreſhing View of the Glory of Chriſt, by the exerciſe of Faith on the Revelation of it, with a ſenſe of our intereſt therein, we long after, and

desire to come unto this more perfect abiding, invariable Aspect of it.

CHAP. XIV.

Other Differences between our Beholding the Glory of Christ by Faith in this World, and by Sight in Heaven.

AMONG the many other *Differences* which might be insisted on (altho the greatest of them are unto us at present absolutely incomprehensible, and so not to be enquired into) I shall name two only, and so put a close to this Discourse.

1. IN the View which we have here of the Glory of Christ by Faith, we gather things as it were *one by one, in several parts and parcels* out of the Scripture, and comparing them together in our Minds, they become the Object of our present Sight, which is our spiritual comprehension of the things themselves. We have no proposal of the Glory of Christ unto us by Vision or illustrious appearance of his Person, as *Isaiah* had of old, *Chap.* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4. or as *John* had in the Revelation, *Chap.* 1. *vers.* 13, 14, 15, 16. We need it not, it would be of no advantage unto us. For as unto the assurance of our Faith, we have a *word of prophesie* more useful unto us, than a *Voice from Heaven*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 17, 18, 19. And of those who received such Visions, tho of eminent use unto the Church; yet as unto themselves, one of them cryed out, *Wo is me, I am undone*; and the other *fell as dead at his feet.* We are not able in this life to bear such glorious Representations of him, unto our Edification.

AND as we have no ſuch external propoſals of his Glory unto us in *Viſions*, ſo neither have we any *New Revelations* of him, by *immediate inſpiration*. We can ſee nothing of it, know nothing of it, but what is propoſed unto us in the Scripture, and that as it is propoſed. Nor doth the Scripture it ſelf in any one place, make an entire propoſal of the Glory of Chriſt, with all that belongs unto it; nor is it capable of ſo doing; nor can there be any ſuch Repreſentation of it, unto our capacity on this ſide Heaven. If all the Light of the Heavenly *Luminaries* had been contracted into one, it would have been deſtructive, not uſeful to our ſight; But being by Divine Wiſdom diſtributed into *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, each giving out his own Proportion, it is ſuited to declare the Glory of God, and to enlighten the World: So if the whole Revelation of the Glory of Chriſt, and all that belongs unto it, had been committed into one *ſeries and contexture of Words*, it would have overwhelmed our Minds, rather than enlightned us. Wherefore God hath diſtributed the Light of it through the whole *Firmament* of the Books of the Old and *New Teſtament*, whence it communicates it ſelf, by various parts and degrees unto the proper uſe of the Church. In one place we have a deſcription of his *Perſon*, and the Glory of it; ſometimes in words plain and proper, and ſometimes in great variety of *Allegories*, conveying an heavenly Senſe of things unto the Minds of them that do believe; In others of his *Love* and *Condeſcention* in his Office, and his Glory therein. His *Humiliation*, *Exaltation* and *Power*, are in like manner in ſundry places repreſented unto us. And as *one Star differeth from another in Glory*; ſo it was one way, whereby God repreſented the Glory of Chriſt, in Types and Shadows under the *Old Teſtament*, and another wherein it is declared in the *New*. Illuſtrious Teſtimonies upon all theſe things are planted up and down in the Scripture, which we may collect as choice flowers in the Paradiſe of God, for the

SO the *Spouse* in the *Canticles* considered every part of the Person and Grace of Christ distinctly by it self, and from them all, concludes that *he is altogether lovely*, Chap. 5. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. So ought we to do in our study of the Scripture, to find out the Revelation of the Glory of Christ, which is made therein, as did the Prophets of old, as unto what they themselves received by immediate Inspiration. *They searched diligently what the spirit of Christ which was in them did signifie, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should ensue*, 1 Pet. 1. 11, 12. But this setting of Christ by parts in the Revelation of him, is one cause why we see him here but in part.

SOME suppose that by *Chopping* and *Painting*, and *Gilding*, they can make an Image of Christ that shall perfectly represent him to their Sences and carnal Affections from head to foot. But they *feed on ashes*, and have *a lie in their right hand*, Jesus *Christ is evidently crucified before our eyes in the Scripture*, Gal. 3. 1. So also is he evidently exalted, and glorified therein. And it is the Wisdom of Faith to gather into one, those *parcelled Descriptions* that are given of him, that they may be the Object of its View and Contemplation.

IN the Vision which we shall have *above*, the whole Glory of Christ will be at *once* and *always* represented unto us; and we shall be enabled in one act of the Light of Glory to comprehend it. Here indeed we are at a loss; our minds and understandings fail us in their Contemplations. It will not yet enter into our hearts to conceive what is the beauty, what is the Glory of this compleat Representation of Christ unto us. To have at *once* all the Glory of what he is, what he was in his outward State and Condition, what he did and suffered, what he is Exalted unto, his Love and Condescention, his Mystical Union with the Church, and the Communication of himself unto it, with the *Recapitulation* of all things in Him:

and the Glory of God, even the Father, in his Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Grace, Love, Goodneſs, Power, ſhining forth eternally in him, in what he is, hath done, and doth, all preſented unto us in *one view*, all comprehended by us at once, is that which at preſent we cannot conceive. We can long for it, pant after it, and have ſome foretaſts of it; namely of that State and Seaſon, wherein our whole Souls in all their powers and faculties, ſhall conſtantly, inſeparably, eternally cleave by Love unto whole Chriſt in the ſight of the Glory of his Perſon and Grace, until they are watered, diſſolved and inebriated in the Waters of Life, and the Rivers of Pleaſure that are above for evermore. So muſt we ſpeak of the things which we admire, which we adore, which we love, which we long for, which we have ſome foretaſts of in ſweetneſs ineffable, which yet we cannot comprehend.

THESE are ſome few of thoſe things whence ariſeth the difference between that view which we have here of the Glory of Chriſt, and that which is reſerved for Heaven; namely, ſuch as are taken from the difference between the *means* or *inſtruments* of the one and the other, *Faith* and *Sight*.

IN the laſt place, the great difference between them, conſiſts in, and is manifeſted by their *effects*. Hereof I ſhall give ſome few inſtances, and cloſe this diſcourſe.

1. THE Viſion which we ſhall have of the Glory of Chriſt in Heaven, and of the Glory of the immenſe God in him, is perfectly and abſolutely *transforming*. It doth change us wholly into the Image of Chriſt. *When we ſhall ſee him, we ſhall be as he is, we ſhall be like him, becauſe we ſhall ſee him*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. But although the cloſing, perfecting act of this *Transformation* be an act of ſight, or the ſight of Glory; yet there are many things towards it, or degrees in it, which we may here take notice of in our way.

1. THE Soul upon its *Departure from the Body*, is immediately freed fom all the Weakneſs, Diſability, Darkneſs, Uncertainties and Fears, which were impreſſed on it from the Fleſh; wherewith it was in the ſtricteſt Union. The Image of the firſt *Adam* as fallen, is then aboliſhed. Yea, it is not only freed from all irregular ſinful Diſtempers cleaving to our Nature as corrupted, but from all thoſe *ſinleſs Grievances* and Infirmities which belong unto the Original Conſtitution of it. This neceſſarily enſues on the *Diſſolution of the Perſon* in order unto a bleſſed State. The firſt entrance by Mortality into Immortallity, is a ſtep towards Glory. The eaſe which a bleſſed Soul finds in a deliverance from this Encumbrance, is a Door of entrance into eternal Reſt. Such a change is made in that, which in it ſelf is the Center of all Evil, namely *Death*, that it is made a means of freeing us from all the Remainders of what is evil.

FOR this doth not follow abſolutely on the Nature of the thing it ſelf. A *meer Diſſolution* of our Natures can bring no Advantage with it, eſpecially as it is a part of the Curſe. But it is from the Sanctification of it by the Death of Chriſt. Hereby that which was Gods Ordinance for the Infliction of Judgment, becomes an effectual Means for the Communication of Mercy, 1 *Cor.* 5. 22. *Chap.* 15. 54. It is by vertue of the Death of Chriſt alone, that the Souls of Believers are freed by Death from all impreſſions of Sin, Infirmity and Evils, which they have had from the Fleſh, which were their Burden, under which they groaned all their Days. No Man knows in any meaſure the Excellency of this Priviledge, and the Dawnings of Glory which are in it, who hath not been wearied, and even worn out, through long conflicting with the Body of Death. The Soul hereon being freed from all Annoyances, all Impreſſions from the Fleſh, is expedite and enlarged unto the Exerciſe of all its gracious Faculties, as we ſhall ſee immediately.

WITH wicked Men it is not ſo. Death unto them is a Curſe; and the Curſe is the Means of the Conveyance of all Evil, and not Deliverance from any. Wherein they have been warmed and refreſhed by the Influences of the Fleſh, they ſhall be deprived of it. But their Souls in their ſeparate State, are perpetually harraſed with the *diſquieting Paſſions* which have been impreſſed on their Minds by their corrupt fleſhly Luſts. In vain do ſuch Perſons look for Relief by Death. If there be any thing remaining of preſent good and uſefulneſs to them, they ſhall be deprived of it. And their Freedom for a Seaſon from bodily pains, will no way lie in the Ballance againſt that Confluence of Evils which Death will let in upon them.

2. THE *Spirits of juſt Men* being freed by Death from the Clog of the Fleſh, not yet refined; all the Faculties of their Souls, and *all the Graces in them*, as Faith, Love and Delight, are immediately ſet at Liberty, enabled conſtantly to exerciſe themſelves on God in Chriſt. The end for which they were created, for which our Nature was endowed with them, was, that we might adhere unto God by them, and come unto the Enjoyment of him. Being now freed wholly from all that Impotency, perverſneſs, and Diſability unto this End, with all the Effects of them, which came upon them by the *Fall*; they are carried with a full Stream towards God, cleaving unto him with the moſt intenſe Embraces. And all their Actings towards God, ſhall be natural, with Facility, Joy, Delight and Complacency. We know not yet the Excellency of the Operations of our Souls in divine things, when diſburdened of their preſent Weight of their Fleſh. And this is a ſecond ſtep towards the Conſummation of Glory. For,

IN the *Reſurrection of the Body*, upon its full Redemption, it ſhall be ſo purified, ſanctified, glorified, as to give no Obſtruction unto the Soul in its Operations, but be a

blessed Organ for its highest and most spiritual Actings. The *Body* shall never more be a Trouble, a Burthen unto the Soul, but an Assistant in its Operations, and participant of its Blessedness. Our Eyes were made to *see our Redeemer*, and our other Sences to receive impressions from him, according unto their Capacity. As the Bodies of wicked Men shall be restored unto them to encrease and compleat their Misery in their Sufferings; so shall the Bodies of the just be restored unto them, to heighten and consummate their Blessedness.

3. THESE things are *preparatory* unto Glory. The compleat Communication of it, is by the *Infusion of a new heavenly Light* into the Mind, enabling us to see the Lord Christ as he is. The Soul shall not be brought into the immediate Presence of Christ without a *new Power* to behold him, and the immediate Representation of his Glory. Faith now doth cease as unto the manner of its Operation in this Life, whilst we are absent from Christ. This *Light of Glory* succeeds into its Room, fitted for that State and all the ends of it, as *Faith* is for that which is present. And,

4. IN the *first Operation* of this Light of Glory, Believers shall so behold the glory of Christ, and the glory of God in him, as that therewith, and thereby they shall be immediately and universally *changed into his Likeness*. They shall be as he is, when they shall see him as he is. There is no growth in glory, as unto *Parts*, there may be as unto *Degrees*. Additions may be outwardly made unto what is at first received, as by the Resurrection of the Body; but the internal Light of Glory, and its transforming Efficacy is capable of no degrees, though new Revelations may be made unto it, unto Eternity. For the infinite Fountain of Life, and Light, and Goodness, can never be fathomed, much less exhausted. And what God spake on the Entrance of sin, by the way of contempt and reproach, *Behold the Man is become like one of*

us, upbraiding him with what he had fooliſhly deſigned; on the Accompliſhment of the Work of his Gace, he ſays in Love and infinite Goodneſs, *Man is become like one of us*, in the perfect Reſtoration of our Image in him. This is the firſt Effect of the Light of Glory.

FAITH alſo in beholding the glory of Chriſt in this Life, is accompanied with a *transforming Efficacy*, as the Apoſtle expreſly declares, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. It is the *Principle* from whence, and the *Inſtrumental Cauſe* whereby all ſpiritual change is wrought in us in this Life; but the Work of it is imperfect; firſt becauſe it is *gradual*, and then becauſe it is *partial*.

1. AS unto the *manner* of its Operation, it is *gradual*, and doth not at once transform us into the Image of Chriſt. Yea, the degrees of its Progreſs therein, are unto us for the moſt part imperceptible. It requires much ſpiritual Wiſdom and Obſervation to obtain an *Experience* of them in our own Souls. *The inward man is renewed day by day*, whilſt we behold theſe inviſible things, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16, 17, 18. but how? even as the *outward Man* decays by Age, which is by inſenſible Degrees and Alterations. Such is the *Transformation* which we have by Faith in its preſent View of the glory of Chriſt. And according to our Experience of its Efficacy herein, is our Evidence of its Truth and Realty in the beholding of him. No Man can have the leaſt ground of aſſurance that he hath ſeen Chriſt and his glory by Faith, without ſome *Effects* of it in changing him into his Likeneſs. For as on the Touch of his Garment by the Woman in the Goſpel, Vertue went out from him to heal her Infirmity: So upon this View of Faith, an influence of *transforming* Power will proceed from Chriſt unto the Soul.

2. AS unto the *Event* it is but *partial*. It doth not bring this Work unto perfection. The change wrought by it, is indeed great and glorious; or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, it is *from Glory to Glory*, in a Progreſs of glorious

Grace: But *absolute perfection* is reserved for Vision. As unto Divine Worship, *Perfection was not by the Law.* It did many things preparatory unto the Revelation of the Will of God concerning it; but it *made nothing perfect*: So *absolute Perfection* in Holiness, and the Restoration of the Image of God, is not by the Gospel, is not by Faith; however it gives us many preparatory degrees unto it, as the Apostle fully declares, *Phil.* 3. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

SECONDLY, *Vision* is *Beatifical*, as it is commonly called, and that not amiss. It gives perfect Rest and Blessedness unto them in whom it is. This may be a little opened in the ensuing Observations.

1. THERE are *continual Operations* of God in Christ, in the Souls of them that are glorified, and Communications from him unto them. For all Creatures must eternally live even in Heaven, in dependance on him who is the eternal Fountain of Being, Life, Goodness and Blessedness unto all. As we cannot subsist one moment in our Beings, Lives, Souls, Bodies, the inward or outward Man, without the continual Actings of divine Power in us, and towards us; so in the glorified State our *All* shall depend eternally on Divine Power and Goodness, communicating themselves unto us, for all the ends of our blessed Subsistance in Heaven.

2. WHAT is the *way and manner* of these Communications, we cannot comprehend. We cannot indeed fully understand the Nature and way of his *Spiritual Communications* unto us in this Life. We know these things by their Signs, their outward Means, and principally by the Effects they produce in the real change of our Natures. But in themselves we see but little of them. *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the Sound thereof, but we know not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit*, Joh. 3. 8. All Gods real Operations in Heaven and Earth are incomprehensible, as being Acts of infinite Power, and we cannot search

3. ALL *Communications* from the Divine Being and infinite Fulneſs in Heaven unto glorified Saints, are in, and through Chriſt Jeſus, who ſhall for ever be the *Medium* of Communication between God and the Church, even in glory. All things being *gathered into one head* in him, even things in Heaven, and things in Earth; that Head being in immediate dependence on God, this Order ſhall never be diſſolved, *Epheſ.* 1. 10, 11. 1 *Cor.* 3. 23. And on theſe Communications from God through Chriſt depends entirely our Continuance in a State of Bleſſedneſs and Glory. We ſhall no more be ſelf-ſubſiſtent in glory, than we are in Nature or Grace.

4. THE way on our part whereby we ſhall receive theſe Communications from God by Chriſt, which are the eternal Springs of Life, Peace, Joy and Bleſſedneſs, is this *Viſion*, the *Sight* whereof we ſpeak. For as it is expreſly aſſigned thereunto in the Scripture; ſo whereas it contains the perfect Operation of our Minds and Souls in a perfect State, on the moſt perfect Object, it is the only means of our Bleſſedneſs. And this is the true Cauſe whence there neither is, nor can be any *Satiety* or wearineſs in Heaven, in the eternal Contemplation of the ſame glory. For not only the *Object* of our ſight is abſolutely infinite, which can never be ſearched into the bottom; yea, is *perpetually new* unto a finite underſtanding; ſo our *ſubjective* Bleſſedneſs conſiſting in continual freſh Communications from the infinite Fulneſs of the Divine Nature, derived unto us through *Viſion*, is always *new*, and always will be ſo to Eternity. Herein ſhall all the Saints of God drink of the *Rivers of Pleaſure* that are at his Right Hand, be ſatisfied with his Likeneſs, and refreſh themſelves in the eternal Springs of Life, Light and Joy for evermore.

THIS *effect* that View which we have by Faith of the glory of Chriſt in this World, doth not produce. It is *Sanctifying*, not *Glorifying*. The beſt of Saints are far

from a perfect or *glorified State* in this Life. And that not only on the account of the *outward Evils*, which in their Persons they are exposed unto; but also of the Weakness and Imperfection of their inward State in Grace. Yet we may observe some things unto the *Honour* of Faith in them who have received it. As,

1. IN its due Exercise on Christ, it will give unto the Souls of Believers some *previous Participation* of future glory, working in them *Dispositions* unto, and *Preparation* for the Enjoyment of it.

2. THERE is no *Glory*, no *Peace*, no *Joy*, no Satisfaction in this World to be compared with what we receive by that weak and *imperfect View* which we have of the Glory of Christ by Faith. Yea, all the Joys of the World are a thing of nought in Comparison of what we so receive.

3. IT is sufficient to give us such a *Perception*, such a *Foretaste* of future Blessedness in the Enjoyment of Christ, as may continually stir us up to breath and pant after it. But it is not *Beatifical*.

OTHER Differences of an alike Nature between our *Beholding of the Glory of Christ* in this Life by Faith, and that *Vision* of it, which is reserved for Heaven, might be insisted on; but I shall proceed no further. There is nothing farther for us to do herein but that now and always we shut up all our Meditations concerning it, with the *deepest Self-abasement* out of a Sense of our Unworthiness and Insufficiency to comprehend those things, *Admiration* of that excellent Glory which we cannot comprehend, and *vehement Longings* for that Season when he shall *see him as he is*, be *ever with him*, and know him, even as we are known.

FINIS.

CHAP. I.

Application of the foregoing Meditations concerning the Glory of Chriſt. Firſt in an Exhortation unto ſuch as are not yet Partakers of Him.

THAT which remains, is to make ſome Application of the Glorious Truth inſiſted on unto the Souls of them that are concerned: And what I have to offer unto that end, I ſhall diſtribute under *two Heads*. The *Firſt* ſhall be with reſpect unto them who are yet *Strangers* from this Holy and Glorious One, who are not yet made partakers of him, nor have any eſpecial Intereſt in him. And the *Second* ſhall be directed unto *Believers*, as a Guide and Aſſiſtance unto their *Recovery from Spiritual Decays, and the Revival of a Spring of vigorous Grace, Holineſs and Obedience in them.*

FOR the firſt of theſe, although it ſeems not directly to lye in our way, yet is it ſuited unto the method of the Goſpel, that wherever there is a Declaration of the Excellencies of Chriſt, in his Perſon, Grace or Office, it ſhould be accompanied with an Invitation and Exhortation unto Sinners to come unto him. This method he himſelf firſt made uſe of, *Mat.* 11. 27, 28, 29, 30. *Joh.* 7. 37, 38. and conſecrated it unto our uſe alſo. Beſides, it is neceſſary from the nature of the things

themſelves, for who can dwell on the conſideration of the Glory of Chriſt, being called therewith to the Declaration of it, but his own mind will engage him to invite loſt Sinners unto a participation of him. But I ſhall at preſent proceed no further in this Exhortation, but only unto the Propoſal of ſome of thoſe Conſiderations which may prepare, encline, and diſpoſe their Minds unto a cloſure with him as he is tendred in the Goſpel. As,

1. LET them conſider well what is their preſent State with reſpect unto God and Eternity. This *Moſes* wiſheth for the *Iſraelites*, *Deut.* 32. 29. *Oh that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end:* It is the greateſt Folly in the World to leave the Iſſues of theſe things unto an uncertain hazzard: And that Man who cannot prevail with himſelf ſtrictly to examine what is his State and Condition with reſpect unto Eternity, doth never do any good, nor abſtain from any evil in a due manner; remember therefore, that *many are called, but few are choſen.* To be called, is to enjoy all the outward Priviledges of the Goſpel, which is all you unto whom I ſpeak can pretend unto, yet this you may do and not be chaſen: Even among thoſe unto whom the Word is preached, they are but few that ſhall be ſaved. In the Diſtribution made by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt of the Hearers of the Word into four ſorts of ground, it was but one of them that received real Benefit thereby; and if our Congregations are no better than were his Hearers, there is not above a fourth part of them that will be ſaved, it may be a far leſs number: And is it not ſtrange that every one of them is not jealous over himſelf and his own Condition? Many herein deceive

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themſelves, until they fall under woful ſurprizals. And this is repreſented in the Account of the final Judgment; for the generality of thoſe who have profeſſed the Goſpel are introduced as complaining of their Diſappointments, *Mat.* 25. 41, 42, 43. For what is there ſpoken, is only a Declaration of what befell them here in the cloſe of their Lives, and their Perſonal Judgment thereon.

2. TAKE heed of being deluded by common Preſumptions. Moſt men have ſome thoughts in general about what their ſtate is, and what it will be in the iſſue: But they make no diligent ſearch into this matter, becauſe a number of common preſumptions do immediately inſinuate themſelves into their minds for their relief; and they are ſuch, as all whoſe force and efficacy unto this end lies in this, that they differ from others, and are better than they; as that they are Chriſtians, that they are in the right way of Religion, that they are partakers of the outward privileges of the Goſpel, hearing the Word, and participation of the Sacraments; that they have light and convictions, ſo as that they abſtain from Sin, and perform Duties ſo as others do not, and the like. All thoſe with whom it is not ſo, who are behind them in theſe things, they judge to be in an ill State and Condition, whence they entertain good hopes concerning themſelves: and this is all that moſt truſt unto. It is not my preſent buſineſs to diſcourſe the vanity of Preſumptions, it hath been done by many; I give only this warning in general unto thoſe who have the leaſt deſign or purpoſe to come to Chriſt, and to be made partakers of him, that they put no truſt in them, that they rely not on them; for if they do ſo, they

will eternally deceive their Souls. This was a great part of the preparatory Miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, Mat. 3. 9. *Think not to ſay within your ſelves, we have Abraham to our Father.* This was their great comprehenſive priviledge, containing all the outward Church and Covenant Advantages. Theſe they reſted in, and truſted to unto their Ruine: Herein he deſigned to undeceive them.

3. CONSIDER aright what it is to live and die without an Intereſt in Chriſt, without a participation of him. Where this is not ſtated in the mind, where thoughts of it are not continually prevalent, there can be no one ſtep taken in the way towards him. Unleſs we are throughly convinced that without him we are in a ſtate of Apoſtacy from God, under the Curſe, obnoxious unto Eternal Wrath, as ſome of the worſt of God's Enemies, we ſhall never flee unto him for Refuge in a due manner: *The whole have no need of a Phyſician, but the ſick; Chriſt came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance:* And the Conviction intended, is the principal end of the Miniſtry of the Law. The Miſeries of this State have been the ſubject of innumerable Sermons and Diſcourſes; but there is a general miſery in the whole, that few take themſelves to be concerned therein, or apply theſe things unto themſelves. Let us tell men of it a thouſand times, yet they either take no notice of it, or believe it not, nor look on it as that which belongs unto the way and courſe of preaching, wherein they are not concerned. Theſe things it ſeems Preachers muſt ſay, and they may believe them who have a mind thereunto. It is a rare thing that any one ſhall as much as ſay unto himſelf, Is it ſo with me? And if we

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now, together with this Caution, tell the ſame Men again, that whilſt they are unintereſted in Chriſt, not ingrafted into him by Faith, that they run in vain, that all their labour in Religion is loſt, that their Duties are all rejected, that they are under the Diſpleaſure and Curſe of God, that their End is eternal Deſtruction, which are all unqueſtionably certain, yet will they let all theſe things paſs by without any further conſideration.

BUT here I muſt fix with them unto whom I ſpeak at preſent, unleſs there be a full Conviction in them of the woful deplorable condition of every Soul of whatever Quality, Profeſſion, Religion, outward State it be, who is not yet made partaker of Chriſt, all that I have further to add will be of no ſignification. Remember then that the due conſideration hereof is unto you in your State, your chiefeſt concernment in this World: and be not afraid to take in a full and deep ſenſe of it, for if you are really delivered from it, and have good Evidence thereof, it is nothing unto you but matter of eternal Praiſe and Thankſgiving. And if you are not ſo, it is highly neceſſary that your Minds ſhould be poſſeſſed with due Apprehenſion of it. The work of this Conviction is the firſt effect of true Religion, and the great Abuſe of Religion in the World is, that a pretence of it deludes the Minds of men to apprehend that it is not neceſſary; for to be of this or that Religion, of this or that way in Religion, is ſuppoſed ſufficient to ſecure the Eternal State of men, though they are never convinced of their loſt eſtate by Nature.

4. HEREON conſider the Infinite Condeſcention and Love of Chriſt, in his Invitations and Calls

Calls of you to come unto him for Life, Deliverance, Mercy, Grace, Peace, and Eternal Salvation. Multitudes of these Invitations and Calls are recorded in the Scripture, and they are all of them filled up with those blessed Encouragements, which Divine wisdom knows to be suited unto lost convinced Sinners in their present state and condition. It were a blessed Contemplation to dwell on the Consideration of the Infinite Condescention, Grace and Love of Christ, in his Invitations of Sinners to come unto him, that they may be saved; of that mixture of Wisdom and perswasive Grace that is in them; of the force and efficacy of the pleading and Argument that they are accompanied withal, as they are recorded in the Scripture; but that belongs not to my present Design: This I shall only say, that in the Declaration and Preaching of them, Jesus Christ yet stands before Sinners, calling, inviting, encouraging of them to come unto him.

THIS is somewhat of the Word which he now speaks unto you. Why will ye dye? why will ye perish? why will you not have compassion on your own Souls? Can your Hearts endure, or can your hands be strong in the day of Wrath that is approaching? It is but a little while before all your Hopes, your Reliefs and Presumptions will forsake you, and leave you eternally miserable: Look unto me, and be saved; come unto me, and I will ease you of all Sins, Sorrows, Fears, Burthens, and give rest unto your Souls. Come I entreat you, lay aside all Procrastinations, all delays, put me off no more, Eternity lyes at the door; cast out all cursed self-deceiving Reserves, do not

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so hate me, as that you will rather perish than accept of Deliverance by me.

THESE and the like things doth the Lord Christ continually declare, proclaim, plead and urge on the Souls of Sinners; as it is fully declaclared, *Prov.* 1. ver. 20. *to the* 34. He doth it in the preaching of the word, as if he were present with you, stood amongst you, and spake personally to every one of you: And because this would not suit his present state of Glory, he hath appointed the Ministers of the Gospel to appear before you, and to deal with you in his stead, avowing, as his own, the Invitations that are given you in his Name, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20.

CONSIDER therefore his Infinite Condescention, Grace, and Love herein: Why all this towards you? doth he stand in need of you? Have you deserved it at his hands? Did you love him first? Cannot he be happy and blessed without you? Hath he any Design upon you, that he is so earnest in calling you unto him? Alas, it is nothing but the overflowing of Mercy, Compassion, and Grace that moves and acts him herein. Here lyes the entrance of innumerable Souls into a Death and Condemnation far more severe than those contained in the Curse of the Law, 2 *Cor.* 2. 15, 16. In the contempt of this Infinite Condescention of Christ, in his Holy Invitation of Sinners to himself, lies the sting and poyson of Unbelief, which unavoidably gives over the Souls of Men unto Eternal Ruine: And who shall once pity them to Eternity who are guilty of it? Yea but,

5. PERHAPS if you should on his Invitation begin to look to him, and resolve to come to him, you are greatly afraid that when it comes to the

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Tryal he will not receive you; for no Heart can conceive, no Tongue can expreſs what wretched, vile, and provoking Sinners you have been. That the Lord Chriſt will receive unto him ſuch as we are, we have no hopes, or that ever we ſhall find Acceptance with him: I ſay, it is not amiſs when Perſons come ſo far, as to be ſenſible of what Diſcouragements they have to conflict withall, what difficulties lye in their way, and what objections do ariſe againſt them, for the moſt do periſh in a ſenceleſs ſtupidity; they will not conſider how it is with them, what is required of them, nor how it will be in the latter end; they doubt not but that either they do believe already, or can do ſo when they pleaſe; but when any come ſo far as to charge the failure of their Acceptance with Chriſt on their own unworthineſs, and ſo are diſcouraged from coming unto him, there are Arguments for their Conviction and Perſwaſion, which nothing but the Devil and Unbelief can defeat: Wherefore, that which is now propoſed unto conſideration in anſwer hereunto, is the Readineſs of Chriſt to receive every Sinner, be he who or what he will, that ſhall come unto him: And hereof we have the higheſt Evidences that Divine Wiſdom and Grace can give unto us. This is the Language of the Goſpel, of all that the Lord Chriſt did or ſuffered, which is recorded therein. This is the Divine Teſtimony of the Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and of the Three that bear witneſs in Earth, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, all give their joynt Teſtimony, that the Lord Chriſt is ready to receive all Sinners that come to him; they who receive not this Teſtimony,

ny, make God a Lyar, both Father, Son, and Spirit. Whatever the Lord Chriſt is in the Conſtitution of his Perſon, in the Repreſentation of the Father, in his Office, in what he did on the Earth, in what he doth in Heaven, proclaims the ſame Truth. Nothing but curſed Obſtinacy in Sin and Unbelief can ſuggeſt a thought unto our minds, that he is not willing to receive us when we come unto him. Herein we are to bear Teſtimony againſt the Unbelief of all unto whom the Goſpel is preached, that come not unto him. Unbelief acting it ſelf herein, includes a contempt of the Wiſdom of God, a Denial of his Truth or Faithfulneſs, an Impeachment of the ſincerity of Chriſt in his Invitations, making him a Deceiver, and will iſſue in an expreſs hatred of his Perſon and Office, and of the Wiſdom of God in him. Here then you are ſhut up, you cannot from hence take any Countenance unto your Unbelief.

6. CONSIDER that he is as able to Save us, as he is ready and willing to Receive us. The Teſtimonies which he hath given us unto his Goodneſs and Love are uncontrollable, and none dare directly to call in Queſtion, or deny his Power. Generally this is taken for granted by all, that Chriſt is able to ſave us if he will; yea, who ſhall queſtion his Ability to ſave us, though we live in Sin and Unbelief, and many expect that he will do ſo, becauſe they believe he can if he will: But indeed Chriſt hath no ſuch Power, no ſuch Ability; he cannot ſave unbelieving impenitent Sinners, for this cannot be done without denying himſelf, acting contrary to his Word, and deſtroying his own Glory. Let none pleaſe themſelves

ſelves with ſuch vain Imaginations, Chriſt is able to ſave all them, and only them who come to God by him. Whilſt you live in Sin and Unbelief Chriſt himſelf cannot ſave you; but when it comes to the Tryal in particular, ſome are apt to think, that although they will not conclude that Chriſt cannot ſave them, yet they do on various accounts, that they cannot be ſaved by him. This therefore we alſo give Teſtimony unto, in our Exhortation to come unto him; namely, that his power to ſave thoſe that ſhall comply with his Call is Soveraign, Incontrollable, Almighty, that nothing can ſtand in the way of. All things in Heaven and Earth are committed unto him, all power is his, and he will uſe it unto this end, namely, the aſſured Salvation of all that come unto him.

7. CONSIDER greatly what hath been ſpoken of the Repreſentation of God, and all the Holy Properties of his Nature in Him. Nothing can poſſibly give us more encouragement to come unto him; for we have manifeſted, that God who is infinitely Wiſe and Glorious, hath deſigned to exert all the Holy Properties of his Nature, his Mercy, Love, Grace, Goodneſs, Righteouſneſs, Wiſdom and Power in him, in and unto the Salvation of them that do believe. Whoever therefore comes unto Chriſt by Faith on this Repreſentation of the Glory of God in him, he aſcribes and gives unto God all that Glory and Honour which he aimeth at from his Creatures, and we can do nothing wherewith he is pleaſed equal unto it. Every poor Soul that comes by Faith unto Chriſt, gives unto God all that Glory which it is his Deſign to manifeſt and be exalted in

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and what can we do more? There is more Glory given unto God by coming unto Christ in believing, than in keeping the whole Law, inasmuch as he hath more eminently manifested the holy Properties of his Nature in the way of Salvation by Christ, than in giving of the Law: There is therefore no Man who under Gospel Invitations refuseth to come unto, and close with Christ by believing, but secretly, through the Power of Darkness, Blindness, and Unbelief, he hates God, dislikes all his ways, would not have his Glory exalted, nor manifested, choosing rather to dye in Enmity against him, than to give Glory to him. Do not deceive your selves, it is not an indifferent thing, whether you will come in unto Christ upon his Invitations or no; a thing that you may put off from one season unto another: Your present Refusal of it is as high an Act of Enmity against God, as your Nature is capable of.

8. CONSIDER that by coming unto Christ, you shall have an interest in all that Glory which we have proposed unto you: for Christ will become yours more intimately than your Wives and Children are yours, and so all his Glory is yours also. All are apt to be affected with the good things of their Relation, their Grace, their Riches, their Beauty, their Power; for they judge themselves to have an Interest in them, by reason of their Relation unto them. Christ is nearer to Believers than any Natural Relations are to us whatever; they have therefore an Interest in all his Glory. And is this a small thing in your Eyes, that Christ shall be yours, and all his Glory shall be yours, and you shall have the

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advantage of it unto your Eternal Bleſſedneſs? Is it nothing unto you to continue Strangers from and unintereſted in all this Glory? To be left to take your portion in this World in Luſts and Sins, and Pleaſures, and a few periſhing Trifles with Eternal Ruine in the cloſe, whilſt ſuch durable Subſtance, ſuch Riches of Glory are tendred unto you?

LASTLY, Conſider the horrible ingratitude there is in a neglect or refuſal to come in to Chriſt upon his Invitation, with the doleful Eternal Ruine that will enſue thereon: *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great Salvation?* Impenitent Unbelievers under the preaching of the Goſpel, are the vileſt and moſt ungrateful of all Gods Creation. The Devils themſelves, as wicked as they are, are not guilty of this Sin, for Chriſt is never tendred unto them, they never had an offer of Salvation on Faith and Repentance; this is their peculiar Sin, and will be the peculiar Aggravation of their miſery unto Eternity. Hear ye Deſpiſers, wonder and periſh. The ſin of the Devil is in malice and oppoſition unto knowledge, above what the Nature of Man is capable of in this World. Men therefore muſt ſin in ſome inſtance above the Devil, or God would not give them their Eternal Portion with the Devil and his Angels: this is Unbelief.

SOME it may be will ſay, What then ſhall we do? What ſhall we apply our ſelves unto? What is it that is required of us?

1. TAKE the Advice of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 3. 7, 8, 13. —*To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the day of Temptation in the Wilderneſs: But exhort one another*

ther daily, while it is called to day; leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin. This day, even this is unto you in the tender of Grace the acceptable time, this is the day of Salvation. Others have had this day as well as you, and have miſſed their Opportunity; take heed leſt it ſhould be ſo with you alſo. How if any one ſhould write it down, or peculiarly commit it to remembrance, this day there was a tender of Chriſt and Salvation in him made unto my Soul; from this time I will reſolve to give up my ſelf unto him. And if you find your Reſolutions, charge your Conſciences with what you have engaged, and make your ſelves to know, that if you go back from it, it is a token that you are going to Ruine.

2. CONSIDER that it is high time for you to make ſomewhat of Religion. Do not hang always in ſuſpenſe; let it not be a queſtion with your ſelves, whether you have a mind to be ſaved or no. This is as good a time and ſeaſon for a Reſolution as ever you are like to have whilſt in this World. Some things, nay, many things may fall in between this and the next opportunity, that ſhall put you backward, and make your entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven far more difficult than ever it was; and the living in that uncertainty at beſt, which you do, of what will become of you unto Eternity, is the moſt miſerable kind of Life in the World. Thoſe who put far from them the evil day, and live in the purſuit of luſts and pleaſures, have ſomewhat that gives them preſent ſatisfaction, and they ſay not, There is no hope, becauſe they find the Life of the hand: But you have nothing that gives you any preva-

lent Refreſhment, neither will your latter end be better than theirs, if you dye without an Intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus. Come therefore at length unto a determinate Reſolution what you will do in this matter. Chriſt hath waited long for you, and who knows how ſoon he may withdraw, never to look after you any more.

UPON occaſion of the preceding Diſcourſe concerning the Glory of Chriſt, I thought it neceſſary to add unto it this brief Exhortation unto Faith in him, aiming to ſuit it unto the Capacity of the meaneſt Sinner that is capable of any ſelf-conſideration as unto his Eternal Welfare. But yet a little further, to give efficacy unto this Exhortation, it will be neceſſary to remove ſome of thoſe common and obvious Tergiverſations that convinced Sinners do uſually betake themſelves unto, to put off a preſent compliance with the calls of Chriſt to come unto him; for although it is Unbelief alone acting in the darkneſs of mens minds and the obſtinacy of their Wills, that effectually keeps off Sinners from coming unto Chriſt upon his Call, yet it ſhrouds it ſelf under various pretences, that it may not appear in it's own ugly Form; for no Sin, whereof Men can be guilty of in this World, is of ſo horrible a Nature, and ſo dreadful an Aſpect as is this Unbelief, where a clear view of it is obtained in Evangelical Light: wherefore by the aid of Satan, it ſuggeſts other pleas and pretences unto the Minds of Sinners, under which they may countenance themſelves in a Refuſal to come to Chriſt; ſee 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Any thing elſe it ſhall be, but not Unbelief, that they all diſavow. I ſhall therefore ſpeak unto a few of thoſe Tergiverſations in this caſe which are obvious,

vious, and which are exemplified in the Gospel it self.

I. SOME do say on such Exhortations: What is it that you would have us to do? We hear the Word preached, we believe it as well as we can, we do many things willingly, and abstain from many evils diligently, what is more required of us? This is the Language of the Hearts of the most with whom in this Case we have to do: And I say,

1. IT is usual with them who do something in the ways of God, but not all they should, and so nothing in a due manner, to expostulate about requiring of them more than they do. So the People dispute with God himself, *Mal.* 1. 6. Chap. 3. 8, 13. So they in the Gospel who esteemed themselves to have done their Duty, being pressed unto Faith by Christ Jesus, ask him with some Indignation, *What shall we do, that we might work the work of God?* John 6. 28. If what we do be not enough, what is it that you require more of us? So was it with the Young Man, *Mat.* 19. 20. *What do I lack yet?* Be advised therefore not to be too confident of your State, lest you should yet lack that one thing, the want whereof might prove your Eternal Ruine.

2. THE things mentioned, with all of the like nature, which may be multiplied, may be where there is no one spark of saving Faith. *Simon Magus* heard the Word, and believed as well as he could; *Herod* heard it, and did many things gladly; and all sorts of Hypocrites do upon their Convictions perform many duties, and abstain from many sins, so as that notwithstanding this plea you may perish for ever.

3. WHERE theſe things are ſincere, they belong unto the exerciſe of Faith; they may be after a ſort without Faith, but Faith cannot be without them: But there is a fundamental Act of Faith, whereby we cloſe with Chriſt, whereby we receive him; that is, in order of Nature, antecedent unto it's actings in all other Duties and Occaſions; it is laying the foundation, other things belong to the building. This is that you are called on to ſecure, and you may know it by theſe two Properties:

1. It is *Singular*: So our Saviour tells the *Jews*, *Joh.* 6. 29. *This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he hath ſent.* The Act, Work or Duty of Faith in the receiving of Chriſt, is a peculiar ſingular Work, wherein the Soul yields eſpecial obedience unto God: It is not to be reckoned unto ſuch common Duties as thoſe mentioned, but the Soul muſt find out wherein it hath in a ſingular manner cloſed with Chriſt upon the Command of God.

2. IT is accompanied with an univerſal Spiritual Change in the whole Soul, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; old things are paſſed away, behold all things are become new:* Wherefore if you would not chuſe rather to deceive and ruine your own Souls, come to the tryal whether indeed you have received Chriſt in ſuch a ſingular transforming act of Faith, do not on ſuch pretences want a compliance with the word of Exhortation propoſed unto you. But

II. SOME will ſay, they know not how to proceed in this Work. They can make nothing of it; they have tryed to come to this believing, but do ſtill fail in what they deſign; they go on

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and off, but can make no progreſs, can come to no ſatisfaction; therefore they think it beſt to let things go in general as they are, without putting themſelves to farther trouble as unto any eſpecial Act of Faith in the receiving of Chriſt. This is the language of Mens Hearts, though not of their mouths, another ſhelter of Unbelief, and they act accordingly; they have a ſecret Deſpondency, which keeps them ſafe from attempting a real cloſure with Chriſt on the tender of the Goſpel: Something may be offered unto this diſtempered frame of Mind.

1. REMEMBER the Diſciples that were fiſhing, and had toiled all night, but caught nothing, *Luk.* 5. 3, 4; upon the coming of Chriſt unto them, he requires that they ſhould caſt out their Nets once more; *Peter* makes ſome excuſe from the labour which they had taken in vain all Night; however he would venture once more on the Command of Chriſt, and had an aſtoniſhing draught of Fiſhes, *ver.* 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Have you bin wearied with diſappointments in your attempts and Reſolutions, yet caſt in your Net this once more upon the Command of Chriſt, venture this once more to come unto him on his Call and Invitation, you know not what ſucceſs he may give unto you.

2. CONSIDER that it is not failing in this or that Attempt of coming to Chriſt, but a giving over your Endeavours that will be your Ruine. The Woman of *Canaan* in her great outcry to Chriſt for Mercy, *Mat.* 15. 22. had many a Repulſe: Firſt it is ſaid, he anſwered her not a word, then his Diſciples deſired that he would ſend her away, that ſhe might not trouble him any more; whereon he gives a Reaſon why he would not re-

gard her, or why he could juſtly paſs her by; ſhe was not an *Iſraeliteſs*, unto whom he was ſent, yet ſhe gives not over, but preſſing into his preſence, cries out for Mercy, *ver.* 25. being come to that iſſue, to try and draw out her Faith to the utmoſt, which was his deſign from the beginning, he reckons her among Dogs, that were not to have Childrens bread given unto them. Had ſhe now at laſt given over upon this ſevere Rebuke, ſhe had never obtained Mercy; but perſiſting in her Requeſt ſhe at laſt prevailed, *ver.* 27. 28. It may be you have prayed, and cryed, and reſolved, and vowed, but all without ſucceſs as you ſuppoſe, Sin hath broken thorough all: however, if you give not over, you ſhall prevail at laſt; you know not at what time God will come in with his Grace, and Chriſt will manifeſt his love unto you as unto the poor Woman, after many a rebuke. It may be after all he will do it this day, and if not, he may do it another, do not deſpond. Take that word of Chriſt himſelf for your Encouragement, *Prov.* 8. 34. *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my Gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors.* If you hear him, and wait, though you have not yet admiſſion, but are kept at the gates and poſts of the doors, yet in the iſſue you ſhall be bleſſed.

3. THE Rule in this caſe is, *Hoſ.* 6 3. *Then ſhall we know, if we follow on to know.* Are you in the way of knowing Chriſt in the uſe of Means, hearing the Word, and ſincere Endeavours in holy Duties; though you cannot yet attain unto any Evidence that you have received him, have cloſed with him, nothing can ruine you but giving over the way wherein you are; for then ſhall you know, if you follow on to know the Lord. Many

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can give you their Experiences, that if they had been discouraged by present overwhelming Difficulties, arising from their Disappointments, breaking of Vows, relapses into Folly, they had been utterly ruined, whereas now they are at rest and peace in the Bosom of Christ. On a great surprizal Christ lost at once many Disciples, and they lost their Souls, *John* 6. 66. *They went back, and walked no more with him*; take heed of the like Discouragements.

III. SOME may say, yea, practically they do say, That these things indeed are necessary; they must come to Christ by believing, or they are undone, but this is not the season of it, there will be time enough to apply themselves unto it when other occasions are past. At present they have not leisure to enter upon, and go through with this Duty: wherefore they will abide in their present State for a while, hearing and doing many things, and when time serves, will apply themselves unto this Duty also.

1. THIS is an uncontrollable evidence of that Sottishness and Folly which is come upon our Nature by Sin. A Depravation that the Apostle places in the head of the Evils of corrupted Nature, *Tit.* 3. 3. Can any thing be more fooliſh, ſottiſh and ſtupid, than for men to put off the consideration of the Eternal Concernment of their Souls for one hour, being altogether uncertain whether they shall live another or no? to preferr present Trifles before the Blessedness or Misery of an Immortal State? For those who never heard of these things, who never had any Conviction of Sin and Judgment, to put the evil day far from them, is not much to be admired: But for you who have

Chriſt preached unto you, who own a neceſſity of coming unto him, to put it off from day to day upon ſuch ſlight pretences, it is an aſtoniſhable Folly. May you not be ſpoken unto in the language of the Wiſdom of God, *Prov.* 6. 9, 10, 11. You come to hear the Word, and when you go away, the language of your Hearts is; *Yet a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep:* We will abide a little while in our preſent State, and afterwards we will rouze up our ſelves. Under this Deceit do multitudes periſh every day. This is a dark Shade, wherein curſed Unbelief lyes hid.

2. CONSIDER that this is the greateſt Engine that Satan makes uſe of in the World among them that hear the Word preached unto them, for the ruine of their Souls. He hath other Arts and Ways, and Methods of dealing with other Men, as by ſenſual and worldly Luſts: But as unto them who through their Convictions do attend unto the preaching of the Word, this is his great and almoſt only Engine for their Ruine. There needs no haſte in this matter, another time will be more ſeaſonable, you may be ſure not to fail of it before you dye: However, this preſent day and time is moſt unfit for it, you have other things to do, you cannot part with your preſent frame, you may come again to hear the Word the next opportunity. Know aſſuredly, if your Minds are influenced unto delays of coming to Chriſt by ſuch inſinuations, you are under the Power of Satan, and he is like enough to hold you faſt unto Deſtruction.

3. THIS is as evil and dangerous a Poſture, or frame of Mind, as you can well fall under. If you

you have learned to put off God, and Chriſt, and the Word for the preſent Seaſon, and yet relieve your ſelves in this, that you do not intend like others alwayes to reject them, but will have a time to hearken to their calls; you are ſecured and fortified againſt all Convictions and Perſwaſions, all fears; one anſwer will ſerve for all, within a little while you will do all that can be required of you. This is that which ruines the Souls of multitudes every day. It is better dealing with Men openly profligate, than with ſuch a trifling promiſer. See *Iſa.* 5. 7, 10.

4. REMEMBER that the Scripture confines you unto the preſent day, without the leaſt intimation that you ſhall have either another day, or another tender of Grace and Mercy in any day, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. *Heb.* 3. 7. 13. *Chap.* 12. 15. Take care leſt you come ſhort of the Grace of God, miſs of it by miſſing your opportunity. Redeem the time, or you are loſt for ever.

5. AS unto the pretence of your Occaſions and Buſineſs, there is a ready way to diſappoint the craft of Satan in that pretence, namely, to mix Thoughts of Chriſt, and the Renovation of your Reſolutions, either to come or to cleave unto him with all your Occaſions. Let nothing put it utterly out of your minds; make it familiar unto you, and you will beat Satan out of that ſtrong hold, *Prov.* 7. 4. However, ſhake your ſelves out of this duſt, or deſtruction lyes at the door.

IV. IT is the Language of the Hearts of ſome, that if they give up themſelves unto a compliance with this Exhortation, and go ſeriouſly about this Duty, they muſt relinquiſh and renounce all their Luſts and pleaſures, yea much of their Converſe

verse and Society, wherein they find so much present satisfaction, as that they know not how to part with them. If they might retain their old ways, at least some of them, it were another matter, but this total Relinquishment of all is very severe.

Answ. 1. THE *Jesuites* preaching and painting of Christ among some of the *Indians*, concealed from them his Cross and Sufferings, telling them only of his present Glory and Power; so as they pretended to win them over to Faith in him, hiding from them that whereby they might be discouraged; and so preached a false Christ unto them, one of their own framing. We dare do no such thing for all the World; we can here use no condescention, no compliance, no composition with respect unto any Sin or Lust, we have no Commission to grant that request of *Lot*, *Is it not a little one? let it be spared*; nor to come to *Naamans* terms, *God be merciful to me in this thing, in all others I will be obedient*. Wherefore,

2. WE must here be peremptory with you, whatever be the event, if you are discouraged by it, we cannot help it; Cursed be the Man that shall encourage you to come to Christ, with hopes of Indulgence unto any one Sin whatever. I speak not this, as though you could at once absolutely and perfectly leave all Sin in the root and branches of it; but only you are to do it in Heart and Resolution, engaging into an Universal Mortification of all Sin, as by Grace from above you shall be enabled: But your Choice must be absolute, without Reserves, as to Love, Interest and Design; God or the World, Christ or *Belial*, Holiness

lineſs or Sin, there is no Medium, no terms of compoſition, 2 *Cor.* 6. 15, 16, 17, 18.

3. AS unto what you pretend of your Pleaſures, the Truth is, you never yet had any real Pleaſure, nor do know what it is: How eaſie were it to declare the folly, vanity, bitterneſs, poyſon of thoſe things which you have eſteemed your pleaſures. Here alone, namely, in Chriſt, and a participation of him, are true Pleaſures, and durable Riches to be obtained; Pleaſure of the ſame Nature with, and ſuch as like pleaſant Streams flow down into the Ocean of Eternal Pleaſures above. A few moments in theſe Joys are to be preferred above the longeſt continuance in the curſed pleaſures of this World. See *Prov.* 3. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

V. IT will be ſaid by ſome, that they do not ſee thoſe who profeſs themſelves to be Believers, to be ſo much better than they are, as that you need to preſs us ſo earneſtly to ſo great a change; we know not why we ſhould not be accounted Believers already as well as they. I ſhall in a few words, as well as I am able, lay this ſtumbling-block out of the way, though I confeſs at this day it is weighty and cumberſome. And I ſay,

1. AMONG them that profeſs themſelves to be Believers, there are many falſe, corrupt Hypocrites; and it is no wonder that on various occaſions they lay the ſtumbling-block of their Iniquities before the faces of others: But they ſhall bear their own burthen and Judgment.

2. IT is acknowledged, it muſt be bewailed, that ſome whom we have reaſon to judge to be true Believers, yet through their unmortified Pride, or Covetouſneſs, or Careleſneſs in their Converſation, or vain Attire, and conformity to the World,

World, or Frowardneſs, do give juſt occaſion of offence. We confeſs that God is diſpleaſed herewith, Chriſt and the Goſpel diſhonour'd, and many that are weak are wounded, and others diſcouraged. But as for you, this is not your Rule; this is not propoſed unto you, but that Word only is ſo that will never fail you.

3. THE World doth not know, nor is able to make a right Judgment of Believers; nor do you ſo, for it is the Spiritual Man alone that diſcerneth the things of God. Their Infirmities are viſible to all, their Graces inviſible; the King's Daughter is glorious within. And when you are able to make a right Judgment of them, you will deſire no greater Advancement than to be of their Society, *Pſal.* 16. 3.

THESE few Inſtances of the pretences wherewith Unbelief covers it's Deformity, and hides that deſtruction wherewith it is accompanied, may ſuffice unto our preſent purpoſe; they are multiplied in the minds of Men, impregnated by the ſuggeſtions of Satan on their Darkneſs and Folly. A little Spiritual Wiſdom will rend the vail of them all, and expoſe Unbelief acting in Enmity againſt Chriſt under them. But what hath been ſpoken may ſuffice to anſwer the neceſſity of the preceding Exhortaion on this Occaſion.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Way and Means of the Recovery of Spiritual Decayes, and of obtaining freſh Springs of Grace.

THE Application of the ſame Truth in the Second place belongs unto *Believers*, eſpecially ſuch as have made any long profeſſion of walking in the ways of God and the Goſpel. And that which I deſign herein, is to manifeſt, That a ſteady Spiritual view of the Glory of Chriſt by Faith, will give them a gracious Revival from inward Decayes, and freſh Springs of Grace, even in their latter days. A Truth this is, as we ſhall ſee confirmed by Scripture, with the joyful Experience of multitudes of Believers, and is of great importance unto all that are ſo.

THERE are two things, which thoſe who after a long profeſſion of the Goſpel are entring into the Confines of Eternity, do long for and deſire. The one is, that all their Breaches may be repaired, their Decays recovered, their Backſlidings healed: For unto theſe things they have been leſs or more obnoxious in the courſe of their walking before God. The other is, that they may have freſh Springs of Spiritual Life, and vigorous actings of all Divine Graces, in Spiritual Mind-

Mindedneſs, Holineſs, and Fruitfulneſs, unto the praiſe of God, the honour of the Goſpel, and the encreaſe of their own Peace and Joy. Theſe things they value more than all the World, and all that is in it; about theſe things are their Thoughts and Contrivances exerciſed night and day. Thoſe with whom it is otherwiſe, whatever they pretend, are in the dark unto themſelves, and their own Condition: For it is in the Nature of this Grace to grow and encreaſe unto the end. As Rivers, the nearer they come unto the Ocean whither they tend, the more they increaſe their waters, and ſpeed their ſtreams: So will Grace flow more freely and fully in it's near approaches to the Ocean of Glory. That is not ſaving which doth not ſo.

AN experience hereof, I mean of the thriving of Grace towards the end of our Courſe, is that alone which can ſupport us under the Troubles and Temptations of Life, which we have to conflict withal. So the Apoſtle tells us, that this is our great Relief in all our Diſtreſſes and Afflictions, whereon *we faint not, that as our outer man doth periſh, ſo the inner man is renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. If it be ſo, that in the daily Decays of the outward man, in all the Approaches of it's Diſſolution, we have inward Spiritual Revivals and Renovation, we ſhall not faint in what we undergo. And without ſuch continual Renovations, we ſhall faint in our Diſtreſſes, whatever other things we may have, or whatever we pretend unto the contrary.

AND ordinarily it is ſo in the Holy, Wiſe Providence of God, that Afflictions and Troubles in-

increaſe with Age. It is ſo in an eſpecial manner with Miniſters of the Goſpel; they have many of them a ſhare in the lot of *Peter*, which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt declared unto him, *John* 21. 18. *When thou waſt young, thou girdedſt thy ſelf, and walkedſt whither thou wouldſt; but when thou ſhalt be old, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thy hands, and another ſhall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldſt not.* Beſides thoſe natural Diſtempers and Infirmities which accompany the decays of Life, Troubles of Life, and in their Affairs do uſually grow upon them, when they look for nothing leſs, but were ready to ſay with *Job*, *We ſhall dye in our neſt*, Job 29 18. So was it with *Jacob*, after all his hard Labour and Travel to provide for his Family, ſuch things fell out in it in his Old Age, as had almoſt broken his Heart: And oft times both Perſecutions and Publick Dangers do befall them at the ſame ſeaſon. Whilſt the outward man is thus periſhing, we need great ſupportment that we faint not. And this is only to be had in an Experience of daily Spiritual Renovations in the inner man.

THE Excellency of this Mercy the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth in an Heavenly manner, *Pſal.* 92. 12, 13, 14, 15. *The Righteous ſhall flouriſh like the Palm-tree, he ſhall grow like the Cedar in Lebanon: Thoſe that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God; they ſhall bring forth fruit in old Age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing. To ſhew that the Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.*

THE Promiſe in the 12*th.* verſe, reſpects the times

times of the *Meſſiah*, or of the New Teſtament, for ſo it is propheſied of him; *In his days the Righteous ſhall flouriſh*, Pſal. 72. 7. namely, through the abundance of Grace that ſhould be adminiſtred from his fulneſs, as *Joh.* 1. 16. *Col.* 1. 19. And herein conſiſts the Glory of the Goſpel, and not in outward Proſperity, or External Ornaments of Divine Worſhip. The flouriſhing of the Righteous, I ſay, in Grace and Holineſs, is the Glory of the Office of Chriſt, and of the Goſpel. Where this is not, there is no Glory in the profeſſion of our Religion. The Glory of Kings is in the Wealth and Peace of their Subjects; and the Glory of Chriſt is in the Grace and Holineſs of his Subjects.

THIS *flouriſhing* is compared to the *Palm-tree*, and the Growth of the *Cedar*. The *Palm-tree* is of the greateſt Verdure, Beauty, and Fruitfulneſs, and the *Cedar* of the greateſt and longeſt growth of any Trees. So are the *Righteous* compared to the *Palm-tree*, for the Beauty of Profeſſion, and Fruitfulneſs in Obedience; and unto the *Cedar* for a continual conſtant growth and encreaſe in Grace. Thus it is with all that are righteous, unleſs it be from their own ſinful neglect, as it is with many in this day. They are hereon rather like the *Shrubs* and *Heaths in the Wilderneſs*, *which ſee not when Good cometh*, than like the *Palm-tree*, or the *Cedars of Lebanon*. And hereby do Men what lies in them, obſcure the Glory of Chriſt and his Kingdom, as well as diſquiet their own Souls.

THE words that follow, *ver.* 13. *They that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God*, are not diſtinctive of ſome from other,

other, as though ſome only of the flouriſhing Righteous were ſo planted; but they are deſcriptive of them all, with an addition of the way and means whereby they are cauſed ſo to grow and flouriſh. And this is their Implantation in the Houſe of the Lord; that is, in the Church, which is the ſeat of all the means of Spiritual Life, both as unto growth and flouriſhing, which God is pleaſed to grant unto Believers. To be planted in the Houſe of the Lord, is to be fixed and rooted in the Grace communicated by the Ordinances of Divine Worſhip. Unleſs we are planted in the houſe of the Lord, we cannot flouriſh in his Courts: ſee *Pſal.* 1. 3. Unleſs we are partakers of the Grace adminiſtred in the Ordinances, we cannot flouriſh in a fruitful Profeſſion. The outward participation of them is common unto Hypocrites, that bear ſome leaves, but neither grow like the Cedar, nor bear fruit like the Palm-tree. So the Apoſtle prays for Believers, that Chriſt may dwell in their Hearts by Faith, that they may be *rooted and grounded in love*, Epheſ. 3. 17. *Rooted, built up, and eſtabliſhed*, Col. 2. 7. The want hereof is the cauſe that we have ſo many fruitleſs Profeſſors; they have entred the Courts of God by Profeſſion, but were never planted in his Houſe by Faith and Love. Let us not deceive our ſelves herein; we may be entred into the Church, and made partakers of the outward Priviledges of it, and not be ſo planted in it as to flouriſh in Grace and Fruitfulneſs.

THAT which on this Occaſion I principally intend, is the Grace and Priviledge expreſſed *ver.*

14th. *They shall still bring forth fruit in old Age, they shall be fat and flourishing.* There be three things which constitute a Spiritual State, or belong to the Life of God. (1.) That Believers be fat, that is, by the Heavenly Juice, Sap, or Fatness of the true Olive, of Christ himself; as *Rom.* 11. 17. This is the principle of Spiritual Life and Grace derived from him. When this abounds in them so as to give them strength and vigour in the Exercise of Grace, to keep them from decays and withering, they are said to be fat, which in the Scripture Phrase is strong and healthy. (2.) That they flourish in the Greenness (as the word is) and Verdure of Profession; for vigorous Grace will produce a flourishing Profession. (3.) That they still bring forth Fruit in all Duties of Holy Obedience: All these are promised unto them even in Old Age.

EVEN Trees when they grow old (the Palm and the Cedar) are apt to lose of their Juice and Verdure: and men in Old Age are subject unto all sorts of Decays both outward and inward. It is a rare thing to see a Man in Old Age naturally vigorous, healthy and strong; and would it were not more rare to see any Spiritually so at the same Season: But this is here promised unto Believers as an especial Grace and Priviledge, beyond what can be represented in the growth or fruit-bearing of Plants and Trees.

THE Grace intended, is, That when Believers are under all sorts of bodily and Natural Decays, and it may be have been overtaken with Spiritual Decays also, there is provision made in the

the Covenant, to render them fat, flouriſhing and fruitful, vigorous in the power of Internal Grace, and flouriſhing in the expreſſion of it in all Duties of Obedience, which is that which we now enquire after.

BLESSED be God for this good Word of his Grace, that he hath given us ſuch encouragement againſt all the Decays and Temptations of Old Age which we have to conflict withall.

AND the Pſalmiſt in the next words declares the greatneſs of this Priviledge: *To ſhew that the Lord is upright; he is my Rock, there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.* Conſider the oppoſitions that lye againſt the flouriſhing of Believers in old Age, the Difficulties of it, the Temptations that muſt be conquered, the Actings of the Mind above it's natural Abilities which are decayed, the wearineſs that is apt to befall us in a long Spiritual conflict, the cries of the Fleſh to be ſpared, and we ſhall ſee it to be an Evidence of the Faithfulneſs, Power and Righteouſneſs of God in Covenant; nothing elſe could produce this mighty effect. So the Prophet treating of the ſame Promiſe, *Hoſ.* 14. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. cloſeth his Diſcourſe with that bleſſed Remark, *Ver.* 9. *Who is wiſe, and he ſhall underſtand theſe things? prudent, and he ſhall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them.* Spiritual Wiſdom will make us to ſee that the Faithfulneſs and Power of God are exerted in this work of preſerving Believers flouriſhing and fruitful unto the End.

HAVING laid the Foundation of this illustrious Testimony, I shall farther declare and confirm my Intention, so to make way for the Application of the Truth under Consideration unto this Case, manifesting, that the way whereby we may be made partakers of this Grace, is by a steady view of the Glory of Christ, as proposed unto us in the Gospel.

THERE is a latter Spring in the Year, a Spring in Autumn: it is indeed for the most part but faint and weak, yet is it such as the Husbandman cannot spare. And it is an evident sign of Barren ground, when it doth not put forth afresh towards the end of the Year. God the good Husbandman looks for the same from us, especially if we had a Summers drought in Spiritual Decays; as the Psalmist complains, *Psal.* 32. 4. Had we not had a latter Spring the last Year, the Land had greatly suffered under the drought of the Summer. And if we have had such a drought in the Course of our Profession by Spiritual Decays, as God the good Husbandman looks for a latter Spring in us, even in old Age, in the vigorous acting of Grace and fruitful Obedience: So without it we can neither have Peace nor Joy in our own Souls. If a Man therefore hath made a great Appearance of Religion in his former or younger days, and when he is growing into Age becomes dead, cold, worldly, selfish; if he have no fresh Springs of Spiritual Life in him, it is an Evidence that he hath a barren Heart, that was never really fruitful to God. I know that many stand in need of being excited by such warning,

unto

unto a diligent consideration of their State and Condition.

IT is true, that the latter Spring doth not bring forth the same Fruit with the former. There is no more required in it, but that the Ground evidence it self to be in good heart, and to put forth that which is proper unto the Season. It may be such Graces as were active and vigorous in Men at their first Conversion unto God, as were carried in a stream of warm natural Affections, may not so eminently abound in the latter Spring of old Age: But those which are proper for the Season, as namely, Spirituality, Heavenly Mindedness, weanedness from the World, readiness for the Cross, and Death, are necessary, even in old Age, to evidence that we have a living Principle of Grace, and to shew thereby that God is upright, he is our Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

WHAT is further to be insisted on, shall be reduced unto these four Heads.

1. THAT the constitution of Spiritual Life, is such as is meet to thrive, grow and encrease unto the end, and will do so, unless it be from the default of them in whom it is.

2. THAT notwithstanding this Nature and Constitution of Spiritual Life, yet Believers are subject unto many Decays, partly gradual, and partly by Surprizals in Temptation, whereby the growth of it is obstructed unto the dishonour of the Gospel, and the loss of their own Peace with Joy.

3. I ſhall ſhew that ſuch at preſent is the condition of many Profeſſors, namely, that they are viſibly fallen under Spiritual Decays, and do not evidence any Intereſt in the bleſſed Promiſe inſiſted on.

4. ON the Confirmation of theſe things, our Enquiry will be, how ſuch Perſons may be delivered from ſuch Decays, and by what means they may obtain the Grace here promiſed, of Spiritual flouriſhing in old Age, both in the ſtrengthning of the inward Principle of Life, and abounding in Fruits of Obedience, which are to the praiſe of God by Jeſus Chriſt: And then we ſhall make Application unto this caſe, of that Truth which is the Subject of the preceding Diſcourſe.

1. THE Conſtitution of Spiritual Life is ſuch, as is meet to grow and increaſe unto the end. Hereby it doth diſtinguiſh it ſelf from that Faith which is Temporary; for there is a Temporary Faith which will both flouriſh for a Seaſon, and bring forth ſome Fruit, but it is not in its Nature and Conſtitution to abide, to grow and increaſe, but rather to decay and wither. It is deſcribed by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Mat.* 13. 20, 21. either ſome great Temptation extinguiſheth it, or it decays inſenſibly, until the mind wherein it was do manifeſt it ſelf to be utterly barren. And therefore whoever is ſenſible of any Spiritual Decays, he is called unto a ſevere Trial and Examination of himſelf, as unto the Nature of

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the Principle of his Profeſſion and Obedience; for ſuch Decays do rather argue a principle of Temporary Faith only, unto which they are proper and natural, than that whoſe Nature it is to thrive and grow to the end, whereon thoſe that have it, ſhall as it is in the Promiſe, ſtill bring forth fruit, and without their own great Guilt be always freed from ſuch Decays.

THAT this Spiritual Life is in it's Nature and Conſtitution ſuch as will abide, thrive and grow to the end, is three ways teſtified unto in the Scripture.

1. IN that it is compared unto things of the moſt infallible increaſe and Progreſs: For beſides that, it's growth is frequently likened unto that of Plants and Trees well watered, and in a fruitful Soil, which fail not to ſpring, unleſs it be from ſome external violence; it is likewiſe compared unto ſuch things as whoſe progreſs is abſolutely infallible, *Prov.* 4. 18. *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more to the perfect day.* The path of the Juſt is his Covenant-walk before God, as it is frequently called in the Scripture, *Pſal.* 119. 35. 105. *Iſa.* 26. 7. *Pſal.* 23. 3. *Mat.* 3. 3. *Heb.* 12. 13. and it comprizeth the Principle, Profeſſion, and Fruits of it. This, ſaith the Wiſe Man, is as the ſhining Light; that is, the Morning Light: And wherein is it ſo? Why, as that goeth on by Degrees, and ſhineth more and more unto the high Noon; (though it may be interrupted ſometimes by Clouds and Storms:) So is this Path of the Juſt, it goes on and increaſeth unto the high Noon,

the perfect Day of Glory. It is in it's Nature so to do, though it may sometimes meet with obstructions, as we shall see afterwards; and so doth the Morning light also.

THERE is no visible difference as unto Light, between the Light of the Morning, and the Light of the Evening; yea, this latter sometimes from gleams of the Setting Sun, seems to be more Glorious than the other. But herein they differ; the first goes on gradually unto more Light, until it comes to perfection; the other gradually gives place unto Darkness, until it comes to be Mid-night. So is it as unto the Light of the Just and of the Hypocrite, and so is it as unto their Paths. At first setting out they may seem alike and equal; yea, Convictions and Spiritual Gifts acted with corrupt ends in some Hypocrites, may for a time give a greater lustre of Profession than the Grace of others sincerely Converted unto God may attain unto. But herein they discover their different Natures; the one increaseth and goeth on constantly, though it may be sometimes but faintly; the other decays, grows dim, gives place to darkness and crooked walking.

THIS then is the Nature of the path of the Just: And where it is otherwise with us in our Walk before God, we can have no Evidence that we are in that Path, or that we have a living, growing Principle of Spiritual Life in us. And it is fit that Professors of all sorts should be minded of these things; for we may see not a few of them under visible Decays, without any sincere en-

endeavours after a Recovery, who yet pleaſe themſelves that the root of the matter is in them. It is ſo, if Love of the World, Conformity unto it, negligence in Holy Duties, and coldneſs in Spiritual Love be an Evidence of ſuch Decays. But let none deceive their own Souls, wherever there is a ſaving Principle of Grace, it will be thriving and growing unto the end. And if it fall under Obſtructions, and thereby into Decays for a Seaſon, it will give no reſt or quietneſs unto the Soul wherein it is, but will labour continually for a Recovery. Peace in a Spiritually decaying condition, is a Soul-ruining Security; better be under terror on the account of ſurprizal into ſome Sin, than be in peace under evident Decays of Spiritual Life.

AND by the way, this comparing of the Path of the Juſt unto the Morning Light, minds me of what I have ſeen more than once. That Light hath ſometimes chearfully appeared unto the World, when after a little ſeaſon by reaſon of Clouds, Tempeſts and Storms; it hath given place again to Darkneſs, like that of the Night; but it hath not ſo been loſt and buried like the Evening Light; after a while it hath recovered it ſelf unto a greater luſtre than before, manifeſting that it increaſed in it ſelf whilſt it was eclipſed as to us. So hath it been with not a few at their firſt Converſion unto God, great Darkneſs and Trouble have by the Efficacy of Temptation, and Injections of Satan poſſeſſed their minds: But the Grace which they have received being as the Morning Light, hath after a while diſentangled it

it ſelf, and given Evidence, that it was ſo far from being extinguiſhed, as that it grew and thrived under all thoſe Clouds and Darkneſs; For the Light of the Juſt doth in the iſſue always increaſe by Temptations, as that of the Hypocrite is conſtantly impaired by them.

AGAIN, As it is as the Morning Light, than which nothing hath a more aſſured Progreſs; ſo it is called by our Saviour *Living water*, Joh. 4. 10. yea, a *Well of water, ſpringing up unto Everlaſting Life*, ver. 14. It is an indeficient Spring, not a Pool or Pond, though never ſo large, which may be dryed up. Many ſuch Pools of Light, Gifts, and Profeſſion, have we ſeen utterly dryed up, when they have come into Age, or been enſnared by the Temptations of the World. And we may ſee others every day under dangerous decays; their Countenances are changed, and they have loſt that Oyl which makes the face of a Believer to ſhine, namely, the Oyl of Love, Meekneſs, Self-denial, and Spirituality of Converſe; and inſtead thereof there is ſpread upon them the fulſome Ointment of Pride, Self-love, Earthly-mindedneſs, which increaſeth on them more and more. But where this Principle of Spiritual Life is, it is as the Morning Light, as an indeficient Spring that never fails, nor can do ſo, untill it iſſue in Eternal Life: and ſundry other ways there are whereby the ſame Truth is aſſerted in the Scripture.

2. THERE are ſundry Divine Promiſes given unto Believers, that ſo it ſhall be, or to ſecure them

them of ſuch ſupplies of Grace as ſhall cauſe their Spiritual Life to grow, increaſe, and flouriſh unto the end, ſuch as that in the Pſalm which we have conſidered: For theſe Promiſes are the Means whereby this Spiritual Life is originally communicated unto us, and whereby it is preſerved in us; by them are we made partakers of this Divine Nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. and through them is it continued in us. Now Promiſes of this Nature, namely, that by the Diſpenſation of the Spirit of Chriſt, and ſupplies of his Grace, our Spiritual Life ſhall flouriſh, and be made fruitful to the end, I ſhall briefly call over one of them only at preſent, which is recorded *Iſa.* 44. 3, 4. *I will pour water on him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine Off-ſpring; and they ſhall ſpring up as among the Graſs, as willows by the water courſes.*

ALTHOUGH this Promiſe may have reſpect unto the Gracious dealing of God with the People of the *Jews* after their Return from the Captivity, yet hath it ſo only as it was Typical of the Redemption of the Church by Jeſus Chriſt: But it belongs properly to the Times of the Goſpel, when the Righteous were to flouriſh, and it is a Promiſe of the New Covenant, as is manifeſt, in that it is not only given unto Believers, but is alſo extended unto their Seed and Off-ſpring, which is an aſſured Signature of New Covenant Promiſes. And here is, (1.) A ſuppoſition of what we are in our ſelves, both before and after our Converſion unto God, namely, as thirſty, dry, and barren Ground. We have nothing in our ſelves, no radi-

radical moisture to make us flourishing and fruitful. And as it is before, so it is after Conversion; *We are not sufficient of our selves, our sufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. Being left to our selves, we should utterly wither and perish. But, (2.) Here is the blessed Relief which God in this Case hath provided; he will pour the sanctifying Water of his Spirit, and the Blessing of his Grace upon us. And this he will so do, as to cause us to spring up as among the Grass, as Willows by the water courses. There is nothing of a more eminent and almost visible growth, than Willows by the water courses. Such shall be the Spiritual growth of Believers under the Influences of these Promises; that is, they shall be fat and flourishing, and still bring forth fruit. And other Promises of the same Nature there are many, but we must observe two things concerning them, that we may be satisfied in their Accomplishment. As,

1. THE Promises of the New Covenant, as unto the first Communication of Grace unto the Elect, are absolute and inconditional; they are the executive conveyances of Gods immutable Purposes and Decrees: And what should be the condition of the Communication of the first Grace unto us? Nothing that is not Grace can be so. If it be said, that this also is of God in us, which is the Condition of the Communication of the first Saving Grace unto us, then I would know whether that be bestowed on us without any Condition; if it be, then that is the first Grace, as being absolutely free; if it be not, then what is the Condition whereon it is bestowed, concern-

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ing which the ſame Enquiry muſt be made, and ſo for ever? But this is the Glory of Covenant Promiſes, that as unto the Communication of the Grace of Converſion and Sanctification unto the Elect, they are abſolutely free and inconditionate: But,

2. THE Promiſes which reſpect the Growth, Degrees and Meaſures of this Grace in Believers are not ſo. There are many Duties required of us, that theſe Promiſes may be accompliſhed towards us, and in us; yea, watchful Diligence in Univerſal Goſpel Obedience is expected from us unto this end: See 2 *Pet.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. This is the ordinary Method of the Communication of all ſupplies of Grace to make us ſpiritually flouriſh, and be fruitful, namely, that we be found in the diligent exerciſe of what we have received. God doth ſometimes deal otherwiſe in a way of Soveraignty, and ſurprizeth men with healing Grace in the midſt of their Decays and Backſlidings, as *Iſaiah* 57. 17, 18. So hath many a poor Soul been delivered from going down into the Pit. The good Shepherd will go out of his way to ſave a wandring ſheep; but this is the ordinary method.

3. NOTWITHSTANDING theſe bleſſed Promiſes of Growth, Flouriſhing, and Fruitfulneſs, if we are negligent in the due Improvment of the Grace which we have received, and the diſcharge of the Duties required of us, we may fall into Decays, and be kept in a low, unthrifty ſtate all our days. And this is the principal ground

ground of the Discrepancy between the Glory and Beauty of the Church, as represented in the Promises of the Gospel, and as exemplified in the Lives and walking of Professors, they do not live up unto the Condition of their accomplishment in them; howbeit, in Gods way and time they shall be all fulfilled. We have therefore innumerable blessed Promises concerning the thriving, growing, and flourishing of the Principle of Spiritual Life in us even in old Age, and until Death: But the Grace promised unto this end, will not befall us whilst we are asleep in Spiritual Sloth and Security. Fervent Prayer, the exercise of all Grace received, with Watchfulness unto all holy Duties, are required hereunto.

3. GOD hath secured the Growth of this Spiritual Life, by the provision of Food for it, whereby it may be strengthened and increased, for Life must be preserved by Food. And this in our Case is the Word of God, with all other Ordinances of Divine Worship which depend thereon, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2, 3. Whatever the state of this Life be, whether in it's Beginning, it's Progress, its Decays, there is suitable nourishment provided for it in the good Word of Gods Grace. If Men will neglect their daily Food that is provided for them, it is no wonder if they be weak and thriftless. And if Believers are not earnest in their desires after this Food, if they are not diligent in providing of it, attending unto it, much more if through Corruptions and Temptations they count it in the preaching of it light and common Food, which they do not value,

lue, it is no wonder if they fall into Spiritual Decays; but God hath herein provided for our growth even unto old Age.

AND this is the first thing which was proposed unto Confirmation, namely, that the Constitution and Nature of Spiritual Life is such, as to be indeficient, so as to thrive and grow even in old Age, and unto the end.

THE Second thing proposed, is, That notwithall this provision for the Growth of Spiritual Life in us, Believers especially, in a long course of Profession are subject to Decays, such as may cast them into great Perplexities, and endanger their Eternal Ruine.

AND these Spiritual Decays are of two sorts: (1.) Such as are gradual and universal, in the loss of the vigour and Life of Grace, both in it's Principle, and in it's Exercise. (2.) Such as are occasioned by Surprizal into Sin through the Power of Temptation; I mean, such Sins as do waste the Spiritual Powers of the Soul, and deprive it of all solid peace.

AS for Temporary Believers, give them but time enough in this World, especially if it be accompanied with outward Prosperity, or Persecution; and for the most part their Decays of one sort or another will make a discovery of their Hypocrisie. Though they retain a Form of Godliness, they deny the Power of it, *Prov.* 1. 31. And if they do not openly relinquish all Duties

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of Religion, yet they will grow ſo Lifeleſs and ſavourleſs in them, as ſhall evidence their Condition; for ſo it is with them who are lukewarm, who are neither hot nor cold, who have a Name to live, but are dead.

AND herein lyeth a ſignal difference in this matter, between ſincere Believers, and thoſe who believe only for a time; for thoſe of the latter ſort do either not perceive their Sickneſs and Decays, their Minds being taken up and poſſeſſed with other things; or if they do find that it is not with them as it hath been formerly, they are not much concerned, and on any occaſional new Conviction they cry, Yet a little more ſlumber, a little more ſleep, a little more folding of the hands to ſleep: But when the other do find any thing of this Nature, it makes them reſtleſs for a Recovery. And although through the many Snares, Temptations, and Deceits of Sin, or through their Ignorance of the right way for their Healing, they do not many of them obtain a ſpeedy Recovery, yet none of them do approve themſelves in ſuch a Condition, or turn unto any undue Reliefs.

NOW that Believers are ſubject to Decays in both the ways mentioned, we have full Teſtimony in Scripture: For as unto that general gradual Decay in the loſs of our firſt Faith, Love, and Works, in the weakening of the internal Principle of Spiritual Life, with the loſs thereon of Delight, Joy and Conſolation, and the Abatement of the Fruits of Obedience, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt

Chriſt doth expreſly charge it on five of the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, *Rev.* 2^d. 3^d. And in ſome of them, as *Sardis* and *Laodicea*, thoſe Decays had proceeded unto ſuch a degree, as that they were in danger of utter Rejection: And hereunto anſwers the experience of all Churches, and all Believers in the World. Thoſe who are otherwiſe minded, are dead in Sin, and have got pretences to countenance themſelves in their miſerable Condition. So is it with the Church of *Rome*; and I wiſh others did not in ſome meaſure follow them therein.

AND as unto thoſe of the Second ſort, whereinto Men are caſt by Surprizals and Temptations, producing great Spiritual Diſtreſs and Anguiſh of Soul, under a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, we have an inſtance in *David*, as he gives us an account of himſelf, *Pſal.* 38. *verſe* 2. to the 10th. *O Lord, thine Arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore. There is no ſoundneſs in my Fleſh, becauſe of thine Anger; neither is there any reſt in my Bones, becauſe of my Sin: For mine Iniquities are gone over my head, as an heavy burthen, they are too heavy for me. My Wounds ſtink and are corrupt, becauſe of my fooliſhneſs*, &c.

IT is certain, that here is a deſcription of a very woful State and Condition: And the Pſalmiſt knowing that he was called of God to be a Teacher and Inſtructer of the Church in all Ages, records his own Experience unto that end. Hence the Title of it is, *A Pſalm to bring to Remembrance*: Some judge that *David* had reſpect

unto some great and sore Disease that he was then visited withall. But if it were so, it was only an occasion of his Complaint; the cause of it was Sin alone. And four things he doth represent: (1.) That he had departed from God, and fallen into provoking Sins, which had produced great Distresses in his mind, *verse* 3, 4. (2.) That he had foolishly continued in that State, not making timely Application to Grace and Mercy for healing, whereby it was grown deplorable, *ver.* 5. And this Folly is that alone which makes such a Condition dangerous; namely, when Men on their Surprizals in Sin, do not speedily apply themselves unto healing Remedies. (3.) That he had herein a continual sense of the Displeasure of God by reason of Sin, *verse.* 2. 3, 4. (4.) That he was altogether restless in this State, mourning, groaning, labouring continually for Deliverance.

THIS is a clearer Delineation of the Condition of Believers, when either by the greatness of any Sin, or by a long continuance in an evil and a careless frame, they are cast under a sense of Divine displeasure. This opens their Minds and their Hearts, declaring how all things are within, which they cannot deny. It is not so with many in the same Measures and Degrees as it was with *David*, whose falls were very great, but the substance of it is found in them all. And herein the Heart knoweth it's own Bitterness; a Stranger intermedleth not with it: None knows the groaning and labouring of a Soul convinced of such Spiritual Decays, but he alone in whom

whom they are. Hereon is it caſt down to the Earth, going mourning all the day long, though others know nothing of it's Sorrows: But it is of a far more ſad Conſideration, to ſee men manifeſting their inward Decays by their outward Fruits, and yet are little or not at all concerned therein. The former are in ways of Recovery, theſe in the Paths that go down to the Chambers of Death.

I ſuppoſe, therefore, I may take it for granted, that there are few Profeſſors of Religion, who have had any long continuance in the ways of it, having withal been expoſed unto the temptations of Life, and much exerciſed with the occaſions of it; but that they have been aſleep in their days, as the Spouſe complains of her ſelf, *Cant.* 5. 2. that is, they have been overtaken with decays of one ſort or another, either with reſpect unto Spiritual or Moral Duties, in their Relation unto Churches or Families; in their Judgments, or their Affections; in their inward Frames or outward Actions, they have been overtaken with the effects of Sloth, Negligence, or the want of a continual Watch in the Life of Faith: I wiſh it were otherwiſe.

I principally herein intend thoſe gradual Declenſions in the Life and Power of Grace, which Men in a long courſe of Profeſſion are ſubject unto. And theſe for the moſt part proceed from Formality in Holy Duties, under the conſtant outward performance of them; vehement Engagements in the Affairs of Life, an overvaluati-

on of sinful Enjoyments, growth in Carnal Wisdom, neglect of daily Mortification of such Sins as Men are naturally disposed unto, with a secret influence from the prevalent Temptation of the days wherein we live, which things are not now to be spoken unto.

3. BUT I come to that which was proposed in the Third Place, namely, To shew that this at present is the State of many Professors of Religion, that they are fallen under those Spiritual Decays, and do not enjoy the effects of the Promises concerning Flourishing and Fruitfulness, which we have insisted on. To fasten a Conviction on them, or some of them at least, that it is indeed so with them, is my present Design: and this ought to be done with some diligence. The Glory of Christ, the Honour of the Gospel, and the danger of the Souls of Men do call for it. This is the secret root of all our Evil, which will not be removed unless it be digged up; who sees not, who complains not of the loss of, or Decays in the Power of Religion, in the days wherein we live? But few there are, who either know or apply themselves, or direct others unto the proper Remedy of this Evil. Besides, it is almost as difficult to convince Men of their Spiritual Decays, as it is to recover them from them; but without this, healing is impossible. If Men know not their Sickness, they will not seek for a Cure. Some when they see their Sickness, and their Wound, will apply themselves unto wrong useless Remedies, like them in the Prophet *Hosea* 5. 13. But none will make use of any Cure who see

ſee no Diſeaſe at all. Wherefore, to faſten a Conviction hereof on the Minds of ſome, we may make uſe of the enſuing Enquiries and Obſervations.

1. HAVE you in the way of your Profeſſion had any Experience of theſe Spiritual Decays? I doubt not but that there are ſome who have been preſerved green and flouriſhing, from their firſt Converſion unto God, who never fell under the power of Sloth, Neglect, or Temptation, at leaſt not for any remarkable Seaſon, but they are but few. It was not ſo ſcarce with any of thoſe Believers under the Old Teſtament, whoſe Lives and Walkings are recorded for our Inſtruction; and they muſt be ſuch as lived in an exact and diligent courſe of Mortification. And ſome there are who have obtained Relief and Deliverance from under their Decays, whoſe Backſlidings have been healed, and their Diſeaſes cured. So it was with *David*, as he Divinely expreſſeth it, *Pſal.* 103. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bleſs his Holy Name: Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, and healeth all thy Diſeaſes: Who redeemeth thy Life from Deſtruction, and crowneth thee with Loving kindneſs, and tender Mercy: Who ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things, ſo that thy Youth is renewed like the Eagles.* So doth he celebrate his Deliverance from that State, whereof he complains, *Pſalm* 38. which we mentioned before. And there is no Grace or Mercy that doth more affect the Hearts of Believers, that gives them a greater Tranſport of Joy and Thankfulneſs, than this of Deliverance from

Backslidings. It is a bringing of the Soul out of Prison, which enlargeth it unto Praise, *Psal.* 142. 7. Of this sort I doubt not but that there are many; for God hath given great warnings of the danger of a Spiritually decaying State; and he hath made great Promises of Recovery from it, and multitudes in the Church are daily exercised herein: but I speak in general unto all. Have you any Experience of such Spiritual Decays, either in the frame of your Spirits, or in the manner of your walking before God, or at least that you are prone unto them, if not mightily preserved by the Power of Grace in your own utmost Diligence? If you have not so, then I fear it is from one of these two Causes.

1. THAT indeed you have never had any flourishing Spiritual State in your Souls. He that hath been always weak and sickly, doth not know what it is to want a state of Health and Strength, because he never had experience of it; much less doth he that is dead, know what it is to want Life. But he that from an exquisite Temper of Health, falls into languishing Distempers, knows distinctly, both how it was, and how it is with him. And the frame of the Minds of many Professors of Religion, with the manner of their walking, is such, as that if they are not sensible of Spiritual Decays, it is evident that they never had any good Spiritual Health; and it is to no purpose to treat with such Persons about a Recovery. There are amongst those who make an outward Profession of true Religion, many that live in all sorts of Sins. If you should deal with them about Backslidings,

ſlidings, Decays, and a Recovery, you will ſeem unto them as *Lot* did to his Sons-in-law, when he told them of the Deſtruction of *Sodom*, as one that mocked, or made ſport with them, *Gen.* 19. 14. or you will be mocked by them for your pains; they have been always ſuch as they are, it was never otherwiſe with them, and it is a ridiculous thing to ſpeak to them of a Recovery. We muſt be able in this caſe to ſay to Men, *Remember whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your firſt works*, Revel. 2. 5. They muſt have had an experience of a better State, or they will not endeavour a Recovery from that wherein they are. Such therefore as ſee neither Evil nor Danger in their preſent Condition, but ſuppoſe all is well enough with them, becauſe it is as good as ever it was, will not eaſily be brought under this Conviction; but they have that which is of no leſs importance for them to enquire into, namely, whether they have had any thing of the Truth of Grace or no. Or,

2. IF you have not this Experience, it is to be feared that you are aſleep in Security, which is hardly diſtinguiſhable from Death in Sin. The Church of *Laodicea* was ſenſibly decayed, and gone off from it's Primitive Faith and Obedience, yet ſhe was ſo ſecure in her Condition, knew ſo little of it, that ſhe judged her ſelf on the contrary to be in a thriving flouriſhing State. She thought her ſelf encreaſed in all Church Riches and Goods, that is, Gifts and Grace, while ſhe was *wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked*, Revel. 3. 17. in ſuch a State as where-

in it is queſtionable, whether ſhe had any thing of the Life and Power of Grace to be found in her or no. And ſo is it with many Churches at this day, eſpecially that which boaſts it ſelf to be without Error, or Blame: And it is ſtrange that a Church ſhould ſuppoſe that it flouriſheth in Grace and Gifts, when it hath nothing but a noiſe of words in their ſtead.

SO God teſtified concerning *Ephraim*, that *gray hairs were ſprinkled on him, yet he knew it not*, Hoſ. 7. 9. He was in a declining, dying condition, but did not underſtand it. Hence it is added, *They do not return to the Lord their God, nor ſeek him for all this*, ver. 10. If Men will not learn, and own their Spiritual Decays, there is no hopes of prevailing with them to return unto the Lord; *the whole have nō need of a Phyſician, but the ſick*; Chriſt *came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance*: ſuch Perſons are under the Power of a ſtupid Security, from whence it will be very hard to rouze them up. Hence it is that we have ſo little ſucceſs for the moſt part, in calling Perſons to look after a Revival and Recovery of their Decays; they acknowledge no ſuch thing in themſelves, ſuch Calls may belong unto others; yea, if any word ſeem to come near them unto their Diſquietment, they are apt to think it was ſpoken out of ſpight and ill will towards them; they approve of themſelves in their preſent Condition. Hence is the Complaint of Chriſt in the Miniſtry of the Word: *I have called, and ye have refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no Man regarded. Ye have ſet at nought all my Counſel, and*

you

you would none of my Reproof, Prov. 1. 24, 25. Hence let this Truth be preſſed a thouſand times, it is not one of a thouſand who will think himſelf ſo concerned, as to apply himſelf unto a Relief. A Spirit of ſlumber ſeems to be poured on many.

2. TO improve this Conviction, I would ask of ſome, whether they have been able to maintain Spiritual Peace and Joy in their Souls. I take it for granted, that ordinarily they are inſeparable Adjuncts of the Life of Faith, in an humble fruitful Walk before God. The Scripture teſtifieth that they are ſo, and no Experience lyes againſt it in ordinary Caſes. And I ſuppoſe that thoſe unto whom I ſpeak, do in ſome meaſure know what they are, and do not delude themſelves with Fancies and Imaginations; they have ſubſtance in them however by ſome derided, and to ſome unknown. Have this Peace and Joy been maintained and born ſway in your Minds? Have they under all Tryals and Surprizals been quickly compoſed by them? Or are you not rather on all Occaſions uneaſie and perplexed? This is certain, that a decaying Spiritual State, and ſolid Spiritual Peace, are inconſiſtent: And if ever you had ſuch Peace, you may by the loſs of it, know into what ſtate you are come.

3. NOT to enquire further into things internal and hidden, wherein Men may juſtifie themſelves if they pleaſe, there are too many open viſible Evidences of theſe Decays among Profeſſors of Religion; they have not kept them from the

he Eyes of the Church, nor yet from the World. Do not Pride, Selfishness, Worldliness, Levity of Attire, and Vanity of Life, with corrupt unsavoury Communication, abound among many? The World was never in a worse posture for Conformity, than it is at this day, wherein all Flesh hath corrupted it's ways; and yet as unto things of outward appearance, how little distinction is left between it, and those who would be steemeed more strict Professors of Religion! was this the way and manner of the Saints of old, of those that went before us in the same Profession? Was it so with our selves in the time of our first Espousals, when we went after God in the Wilderness, in a Land that was not sown; as *Jerem.* 2. 2? Some understand what I say: If we have not some of us had better days, we never had good days in our Lives; if we have had them, why do we not stir up our selves to look after a Recovery?

4. MAY not God say of many of us, what he said of his People of old; *Thou hast been weary of me, O Israel?* Isa. 43. 22. Have we not been weary of God, untill we have abundant cause to be weary of our selves? The most, I presume will be ready with them in *Malachi*, to say, *How, or wherein have we been weary of God?* Do we not abide, yea, abound in the Duties of his Service? What can be more required of us? wherein are we to blame? This were something indeed, but that it is often so, that Men are weary of God, when they even weary God with their Duties and Services, *Isa.* 1. 13, 14. God says in his Word,

He

He is weary, They ſay in their Hearts they are weary, *Mal.* 1. 13. But I anſwer,

MANY cannot with any modeſty make uſe of this pretence. Their Sloth, Indifferency, and Negligence in the Obſervance of the Duties of Divine Worſhip, both in private and publick, is notorious. In particular, is not the Duty of Family Prayer neglected by many, at leaſt as to it's conſtancy and fervency? And although it be grounded in the Light of Nature, confirmed by the general Rules of the Scripture, requiſite unto the Dedication of a Family unto God, ſtrengthened by the conſtant Example of all the Saints of old, and neceſſary in the Experience of all that walk with God; yet do not many begin to ſeek out pleas and arguings to juſtifie their Omiſſion hereof? Are not all things filled with the fruits of the negligence of ſuch Profeſſors in the Inſtruction of their Children and Servants? And hath not God given ſevere Rebukes unto many of us in their fearful miſcarriages? And as unto the publick Worſhip of God, I wiſh that Sloth and Indifferency did not appear upon too many, under various pretences. But,

2. THIS is not that which I do intend. Men may be weary of God, whilſt they abide in the obſervance of a multitude of outward Duties.

1. THEY may be ſo, with reſpect unto that Spirituality and Intention of mind unto the Exerciſe of all Grace, which are required unto ſuch Duties. Theſe are the Life, the Soul, the animating

mating Principle of them, without which their outward performance is but a dead Carkass. Men may draw nigh to God with their Lips, when their Hearts are far from him. This is that which becomes God in his Worship, and is useful to our own Souls; for *God is a Spirit, and he will be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth*; which he is not, but in the Exercise of the Graces of his Spirit in the Worshippers; *For bodily exercise profiteth little, but Godliness is profitable unto all things*, 1 Tim. 4. 8.

TO keep up the Mind unto this frame, to stir up all Grace unto a constant vigorous Exercise in all Holy Duties, is a matter whereunto great Spiritual Diligence and Watchfulness is required: Watch unto Prayer. A thousand pretences rise against it; all the Arts of Sloth, Formality, weariness of the Flesh, and the business of Life, do contend to frustrate the design of it. And the suitableness of resting in the work done unto the Principles of a Natural Conscience, gives efficacy to them all: And when Men come to satisfie themselves herein, it may be it were better that for a time such Duties were wholly omitted; for in that case Conscience it self will urgently call on Men not hardened in Sin, to a consideration of their Condition: wherefore much Spiritual Labour and Diligence is required in this matter. The outward performance of Religious Duties, be they never so many, or however strictly enjoyned, as the daily and nightly Canonical hours amongst the Popish Devotionists, is an easie task, much inferiour unto the constant labour which some

ſome Men uſe in their Trades and Callings. And in them, in the performance of them either publick, or in their Families, men may be weary of God: And according as they are remiſs in the conſtant keeping up of Spirituality, and the Exerciſe of Grace in ſacred Duties, ſo is the Degree of their Wearineſs. And there is almoſt nothing whereby Men may take a ſafer Meaſure of their Decays, or Growth, than by the uſual frame of their Minds in theſe Duties. If they do conſtantly in them *ſtir up themſelves to take hold of God*, as Iſa. 64. 7. it is an evidence of a good Temper of Spiritual Health in the Soul. But this will not be done without the utmoſt Watchfulneſs and Care againſt Impreſſions from the Fleſh and other Temptations. But Sloth and Formality, herein, is a ſign of a thriftleſs State in the inner man: And all Inventions of ſuch Formality are diſſerviceable unto the Intereſt Grace.

2. SO is it with them alſo who attending unto the outward Duties of Religion, do yet indulge themſelves in any known Sin; for there is nothing of God in thoſe Duties, which tend not unto the mortification of all Sin: and Men may keep up a Form of Godlineſs, to countenance themſelves in the neglect of it's Power. And in particular, where any known Sin is indulged unto, where the mortification of it is not duly endeavoured, where our Religious Duties are not uſed, applied and directed unto that end, there is a wearineſs of whatever is of God in them, nor hath the Soul any real entercourſe or Communion with God by them.

5. IF

5. IF we ſhould make a particular Enquiry into the State of our Souls, with reſpect unto thoſe Graces which are moſt uſeful, and tend moſt to the Glory of God, it is to be feared, that the Decays of many would be made very evident; ſuch are Zeal, Humility, Contriteneſs of Heart, Spiritual mindedneſs, vigour of Soul, and Delight in the ways of God, Love, Charity, Self-denial, and like. Are we fat and flouriſhing in theſe things even in old Age? Are they in us, and do abound, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks? 2 *Pet.* 1. 8. Do we bring forth the fruit of them ſo as to ſhow the Faithfulneſs of God in his ſupply of Grace? I ſhall not make a particular Enquiry into them, but only give two General Rules whereby we may try our ſelves with reſpect unto them all.

1. THE loſs of a Spiritual Appetite unto the Food of our Souls, is an Evidence of a Decay in all theſe Graces. Spiritual Appetite conſiſts in Earneſt Deſires, and a Savoury Reliſh: So it is deſcribed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2, 3. *As new-born Babes deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby; if ſo be you have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* There is required unto this Spiritual Appetite an earneſt deſire of the Word, grounded on an Experience of the Grace of God in it unto this end, that we may grow and thrive Spiritually thereby. And this Appetite will give us as juſt a meaſure of the State of Grace in us, as a Natural Appetite unto wholſome Food, with due digeſtion thereon, doth give of a good ſtate of Health in the Body.

THIS

THIS therefore we are to enquire into: Doth it abide in us as formerly? We hear the Word preached as much as ever; but do we do it with the ſame deſire and Spiritual Reliſh as before? Some hear to ſatisfie their Convictions, ſome to pleaſe their Fancies, and ſome to judge of the Perſons by whom it is diſpenſed. It is but in few that the neceſſary preparation for the due receiving of it are found.

WHEN Men grow in Age, they loſe much of their Natural Appetite unto Food; they muſt eat ſtill for the maintenance of Life, but they do it not with that deſire after it, and that guſt in it as in the days of Youth and Health. Hence they are apt to think, that the meat which they had formerly was more ſavoury than what is now provided for them; though what they now enjoy is much to be preferred before what they then had: the change is in themſelves. So we may find not a few Profeſſors, who are ready to think and ſay, that the preaching which they had in former days, and the Religious Exerciſes which they were ingaged in, were far to be preferred above what they now enjoy. But the Change is in themſelves, they have loſt their Spiritual Appetite, or their hunger and thirſt after the Food of their Souls.

THE full Soul loatheth the Honey-comb; but to the hungry Soul every bitter thing is ſweet, Prov. 27. 7. Men being grown full of themſelves, and of a good conceit of their own Abilities, have loſt

loſt their Spiritual Appetite unto the Word of God; and this makes the Word loſe it's Power and Efficacy towards them. That Word which the Pſalmiſt ſays is *ſweeter than the honey, or honey-comb*, Pſal. 19. 10. hath little or no taſte or reliſh in it unto them. If they were hungry, they would find a ſweetneſs in the bittereſt of it's Reproofs, beyond what they can now find in the ſweeteſt of it's Promiſes. They come to hear the Word with ſick Deſires, and low Expectations, as if they were invited to eat after a Feaſt, being ſelf-full before. But this loſs of a Spiritual Appetite, is an Evidence of the Decay of all other Graces whatever.

2. A neglect of making Religion our Principal buſineſs, is another Evidence of the Decay of all ſorts of Grace in us: For where Grace is in it's proper Exerciſe, it will ſubordinate all things unto Religion, and the Ends of it, as *David* twenty times declares in the 119*th.* Pſalm. All things, all Occaſions of Life ſhall be poſtponed thereunto: The Love and valuation of it will bear ſway in our Minds, our Thoughts and Affections, and the practice of it ſhall give Rule unto all other Concernments: But is it ſo with many amongſt us? It is well if Religion be *one thing*, it is far enough from being *the* One thing; every other thing is preferred before it, and it can hardly crowd in to poſſeſs any place in their Minds. To ſee Men continually plodding in the Affairs of the World, regulating all their actings by their concernment in them, diverting only at ſome ſeaſons, as it were out of their way unto Duties of Reli-

Religion, it is vain to ſay, that they make Religion their Buſineſs: But there is ſcarce a more certain Evidence of a frame of Mind ſpiritually Decaying in all ſorts of Graces, if ever any of them were in it in Sincerity and Power, than this one, that Men do not make Religion their chiefeſt Buſineſs: And a little Self-Examination will help Men to judge what it is that they make ſo to be.

LASTLY, I might alſo inſtance in the uſeleſneſs of Men in their Profeſſion; in want of Love unto all Saints, Barrenneſs in Good Works, unreadineſs and unwillingneſs to comply in any extraordinary manner with the Calls of God unto Repentance and Reformation; in Love of the World, and Pride of Life, with Paſſions ſuited unto ſuch Principles, predominant in them; for they are all undeniable Evidences, that thoſe with whom they are found, had never any true Grace at all, or that they are fallen under woful Decays. But what hath been ſpoken may be ſufficient unto our preſent purpoſe.

THIS is the third thing that was propoſed, namely, an endeavour to leave Convictions on the Minds of ſome concerning their Spiritual Decays, and the neceſſity of ſeeking after a Revival by the Means that ſhall be inſiſted on. And I intend it principally for thoſe of us who under a long Profeſſion, are now come unto Age, aud ſhall not have much time for Du-

ty continued unto us. And the Truth is, I meet with none, who are Christians of any considerable Experience, and are Spiritually minded, but they are sensible of the Danger of such Decays in this hour of Temptation, and how difficult it is in the use of all means to keep up a vigorous active frame of Mind in Faith, Love, Holiness and Fruitfulness. And for those who are not concerned herein, I confess I know not what to make of them, or their Religion.

4. I proceed unto that which was proposed in the fourth, or last place; namely, the Way and Means whereby Believers may be delivered from these Decays, and come to thrive and flourish in the inward Principle, and outward Fruits of Spiritual Life, which will bring us back unto the Consideration of that Truth which we may seem to have diverted from. And to this end, the things ensuing are proposed unto Consideration.

1. THE State of Spiritual Decays is recoverable. No Man that is fallen under it hath any Reason to say There is no hope, provided he take the right way for his Recovery. If every step that is lost in the way to Heaven should be irrecoverable, Woe would be unto us; we should all assuredly perish. If there were no Reparation of our Breaches, no healing of our Decays, no Salvation but for them who are always progressive in Grace; if God

should

ſhould mark all that is done amiſs, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *O Lord, who ſhould ſtand?* Nay, if we had not Recoveries every day, we ſhould go off with a perpetual Backſliding. But then, as was ſaid, it it required that the right means of it be uſed, and not that which is deſtructive of what is deſigned, whereof I ſhall give an Inſtance. When Trees grow old, or are decaying, it is uſeful to dig about them, and manure them, which may cauſe them to flouriſh again, and abound in Fruit: But inſtead hereof, if you remove them out of their Soil, to plant them in another, which may promiſe much advantage, they will aſſuredly wither and dye. So it is with Profeſſors, and hath been with many; finding themſelves under manifold Decays, and little or nothing of the Life and Power of Religion left in them, they have grown weary of their Station, and have changed their Soyl, or turning from one way in Religion unto another, as ſome have turned Papiſts, ſome Quakers, and the like, apprehending that fault to be in the Religion which they profeſſed, which was indeed only in themſelves. You cannot give an inſtance of any one who did not viſibly wither and dye therein; but had they uſed the proper means for their Healing and Recovery, they might have lived and brought forth Fruit.

2. A ſtrict Attendance unto the Severities of Mortification, with all the Duties that lead thereunto, is required unto this end: So alſo is

the utmoſt Diligence in all Duties of Obedience. Theſe things naturally offer themſelves, as the firſt Relief in this caſe, and they ought not to be omitted. But if I ſhould inſiſt upon them, they would branch themſelves into ſuch a multitude of particular Directions, as it is inconſiſtent with my Deſign here to handle. Beſides, the way which I intend to propoſe is of another Nature, though conſiſtent with all the Duties included in this Propoſal; yea, ſuch as without which not one of them can be performed in a due manner. Wherefore, as unto theſe things, I ſhall only aſſert their Neceſſity, with a double Limitation.

1. THAT no Duties of Mortification be preſcribed unto this end, as a Means of Recovery from Spiritual Decays, but what for Matter and Manner are of Divine Inſtitution and Command. All others are laid under a ſevere Interdict, under what pretence ſoever they may be uſed, *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* Want hereof, is that whereby a pretended Deſign to advance Religion in the Papacy, hath ruined it. They have under the name and pretence of the means of Mortification, or the Duties of it, invented and enjoyned, like the Phariſees, a number of Works, Ways, Duties, ſo called, which God never appointed, nor approved, nor will accept, nor ſhall they ever do good unto the Souls of Men. Such are their Confeſſions, Diſciplines, Pilgrimages, Faſtings, Abſtinence, framed Prayers to be

be repeated in ſtated Canonical hours, in ſuch a length and number. In the bodily Labour of theſe things, they exerciſe themſelves to no Spiritual Advantage.

BUT it is Natural to all Men to divert to ſuch Reliefs in this caſe. Thoſe who are throughly convinced of Spiritual Decays, are therewithall preſſed with a ſenſe of the Guilt of Sin; for it is Sin which hath brought them into that Condition. Hereon in the firſt place they ſet their Contrivance at work, how they may atone Divine Diſpleaſure, and obtain Acceptance with God: And if they are not under the actual Conduct of Evangelical Light, two things immediately offer themſelves unto them. Firſt, Some extraordinary courſe in Duties, which God hath not commanded. This is the way which they betake themſelves unto in the Papacy, and which Guilt in the Darkneſs of corrupted Nature vehemently calls for. Secondly, An extraordinary multiplication of ſuch Duties, as for the ſubſtance of them are required of us. An inſtance in both kinds we have *Micah* 6. 6, 7. *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of Rams, or with ten thouſands of Rivers of Oyl? Shall I give my Firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſions, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul?* And by this means they hope for a Reſtitution into their former Condition. And

whereas Spiritual Decays are of two ſorts: Firſt, from the Power and Effect of Convictions only, which are multiplied among Temporary Believers: And Secondly, from Degrees in the Power and Effects of Saving Grace. Thoſe whoſe Decays are of the firſt ſort, are never to be diverted from, attempting their Relief by ſuch means: And when they find them fail, for the moſt part they ceaſe contending, and abandon themſelves to the power of their Luſts; for they have no Evangelical Light to guide them in another courſe.

UNTO them who are of the ſecond Sort, is this Direction given, in an endeavour for a Recovery from Backſliding, and thriving in Grace, by a redoubled Attendance unto the Duties of Mortification, and New Obedience. Let care be taken, that as unto the matter of them they be of Divine Appointment, and as to the manner of their performance, that it be regulated by the Rules of the Scripture. Such are conſtant Reading and Hearing of the Word, Prayer with fervency therein, a diligent watch againſt all Temptations and occaſions of Sin; eſpecially an Endeavour by an Holy Earneſtneſs, and vehement Rebukes, of the entrance of any other Frame, to keep the Mind Spiritual and Heavenly in it's Thoughts and Affections.

2. LET them take heed, that they attempt not theſe things in their own ſtrength. When Men

Men have ſtrong Convictions, that ſuch and ſuch things are their own Duty, they are apt to act as if they were to be done in their own ſtrength. They muſt do them, they will do them, that is as unto the outward work, and therefore they think they can do them, that is in a due manner. The Holy Ghoſt hath for ever rejected this confidence, none ſhall proſper in it, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. Chap. 9. 8. But hereby many deceive themſelves, labouring in the Fire, while all they do doth immediately periſh; they have been negligent and careleſs, whereby things are come to an ill poſture with them, and that peace which they had is impaired: But now they will pray, and read, and faſt, and be liberal to the poor, and now an Abſtinence from Sin. All theſe things they ſuppoſe they can do of themſelves, becauſe they can and ought to perform the outward works, wherein the Duties intended do conſiſt. Hereby Chriſt is left out of the whole Deſign, who when all is done, is the Lord that healeth us, *Exod.* 15. 26. And there is another evil herein; for whatever Men do in their own Natural Abilities, there is a ſecret Reſerve of ſome kind of Merit in it. Thoſe who plead for theſe things, do averr there can be no merit in any thing, but what proceeds from our own Free-will; and what is ſo done, hath ſome kind of merit inſeparably accompanying of it: And this is enough to render all Endeavours of this kind not only uſeleſs and fruitleſs, but utterly rejected. Faith r He was, the Aſſiſtance of Chriſt and his

in and unto theſe Duties; or however they may be multiplied, they will not be effectual unto our Healing and Recovery. Theſe things are to be uſed, according as we receive ſupplies of Grace from above, in Subordination unto that Work of Faith that ſhall be declared. Wherefore,

3. THE Work of recovering Backſliders or Believers from under their Spiritual Decays, is an Act of Soveraign Grace, wrought in us by vertue of Divine Promiſes; out of this Eater cometh meat. Becauſe Believers are liable to ſuch Declenſions, Backſlidings, and Decays, God hath provided and given unto us great and precious Promiſes of a Recovery, if we duly apply our ſelves unto the Means of it. One of the places only wherein they are recorded, I ſhall here call over, and explain, *Hoſea* 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. *O Iſrael, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou haſt fallen by thine Iniquity: Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord, ſay unto him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciouſly: ſo will we render the calves of our lips,* &c. *I will heal their Backſlidings, I will love them freely, for mine Anger is turned away from him: I will be as the dew unto Iſrael; he ſhall grow as the Lilly, and caſt out his Roots as Lebanon. His Branches ſhall ſpread, and his Beauty ſhall be as the Olive Tree, and his ſmell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall return, they ſhall revive as the Corn, and grow as the Vine, the ſcent thereof ſhall be as the Wine of Lebanon:* Again. Will

Men

ſay, What have I to do any more with Idols? I have heard him, and obſerved him, I am like a green Fir-tree; from me is thy fruit found.

THE whole matter treated of in general, both as unto the Diſeaſe and Remedy, is fully ſtated in this paſſage of Scripture; and that in the Experience of the Church, and God's dealing with them: we may therefore receive many plain Directions from it, and a ſafe Guidance in our Progreſs, which we ſhall endeavour to take in the enſuing Obſervations.

1. THIS Application of God unto *Iſrael*, (*O Iſrael return*,) was made when the generality of the People were wicked and devoted unto utter Deſtruction. So it is declared in the laſt words of the foregoing Chapter, and their Deſolation fell out not long after accordingly. Wherefore, no Seaſon nor Circumſtances of things ſhall obſtruct Soveraign Grace, when God will exerciſe it towards his Church: It ſhall work in the midſt of deſolating Judgments.

2. IN ſuch a time the true *Iſrael* of God, the Elect themſelves, are apt to be overtaken with the Sins of the whole, and ſo to Backſlide from God, and ſo to fall into Spiritual Decays. So *Iſrael* had now done, though ſhe had not abſolutely broken Covenant with God; He was yet unto her *The Lord thy God*, yet ſhe had

had fallen by her Iniquity. Times of publick Apostacy are often accompanied with partial defects in the best; *Because Iniquity aboundeth, the love of many shall wax cold*, Mat. 24. 12.

3. WHEN God designs to heal the Backsliding of his People by Soveraign Grace, he gives them effectual Calls unto Repentance, and the use of means for their Healing: So he doth here by his Prophet, *O Israel return, take with you words.* And if I could see that God did stir up his Faithful Ministers to apply themselves in a peculiar manner, unto this Work of pressing vehemently all their Congregations with their Duty herein; and let them know, that there is no other way to prevent their Ruine, but by returning unto the Lord, according to the ways of it here prescribed; I should not doubt but that the time of Healing were at hand.

4. THE means prescribed unto this end, that our Backslidings may be healed, in a way suited unto the Glory of God, is renewed Repentance: And this acts it self,

1. IN fervent Prayer; *Take with you words, and say.* Consider the Greatness and Importance of the Work before you, and weigh well what you do in your dealing with God. The matter of this Prayer is twofold: (1.) The pardon of all Iniquity; that is, the taking of it away: And no Sin is omitted, all being now be-

become equally burthenſome; *take away all Iniquity.* When the Souls of Sinners are in good earneſt in their Return unto God, they will leave out the Conſideration of no one Sin whatever. Nor are we meet for Healing, nor ſhall we apply our ſelves unto it in a due manner, without ſome previous ſenſe of the Love of God in the pardon of our Sin. (2.) Gracious Acceptation, *Receive us graciouſly.* The words in the Original are only, וקח טוב, and *receive good*: but both the words being uſed variouſly, the Senſe eminently included in them, is well expreſſed by *receive us graciouſly.* After we have caſt our ſelves under tokens of thy Diſpleaſure, now let us know that we are freely accepted with thee. And this alſo lyes in the Deſires of them who deſign to obtain an Healing of their Backſlidings; for under them they are ſenſible that they are obnoxious unto Gods Diſpleaſure.

2. AFFECTIONATE Confeſſions of the Sin, wherein their Beckſlidings did conſiſt, or which were the Occaſions of them. *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us,* &c. *we will ſay no more to the work of our hands, Ye are our Gods.* Fleſhly Confidence, and Falſe Worſhip, were the two great Sins that had now ruined the Body of the People: Theſe Believers themſelves had an Acceſſion unto them more or leſs, as now they have unto the prevailing Sins of the Days wherein we live, by Conformity unto the World. Of theſe Sins God expecteth a full and free Confeſſion in order unto our Healing.

3. A

3. A renewed Covenant Engagement to renounce all other Hopes and Expectation, and to betake themſelves with their whole Truſt and Confidence unto him; whereof they expreſs, Firſt, The Cauſe, which was his meer Grace and Mercy: *For in thee the Fatherleſs findeth Mercy*; And Secondly, The Effect of it, which is Praiſe and Thankſgiving: *So will we render the Calves of our Lips.* And ſome things we may hence farther obſerve as unto the Caſe under Conſideration. As,

1. ALTHOUGH God will repair our Spiritual Decays, and heal our Backſlidings freely, yet he will do it ſo, or in ſuch a way, as wherein he may communicate Grace unto us, to the praiſe of his own Glory. Therefore are theſe Duties preſcribed unto us in order thereunto; for although they are not the procuring Cauſe of the Love and Grace from whence alone we are healed, yet are they required in the method of the Diſpenſation of Grace, to precede the Effect of them. Nor have we any where a more illuſtrious Inſtance and Teſtimony of the Conſiſtency and Harmony which is between Soveraign Grace, and the diligent diſcharge of our Duty, than we have in this place: For as God promiſeth, that he would heal their Backſlidings out of his free Love, *verſe* 4. and would do it by the Communication of Effectual Grace; *ver.* 5. ſo he injoyns them all theſe Duties in order thereunto.

2. THAT

2. THAT unleſs we find theſe things wrought in us in a way of preparation, for the receiving of the Mercy deſired, we have no firm ground of Expectation, that we ſhall be made partakers of it: For this is the method of Gods dealing with the Church. Then, and then only we may expect a gracious Reviving from all our Decays, when ſerious Repentance working in the ways declared, is found in us. This Grace will not ſurprize us in our Sloth, Negligence, and Security, but will make way for it ſelf, by ſtirring us up unto ſincere endeavours after it, in the perſeverance of theſe Duties. And untill we ſee better Evidences of this Repentance among us, than as yet appears, we can have but ſmall Hopes of a general Recovery from our preſent Decays.

5. THE Work it ſelf is declared, (1.) By it's Nature. (2.) In it's Cauſes. (3.) From it's Effects.

1. IN the Nature of it, it is the healing of Backſlidings; *I will heal their Backſlidings*; the Sin whereby they are fallen off from God, unto whom they are now exhorted to Return. Theſe bring the Souls of Men into a diſeaſed Eſtate, and danger of Death: The Cure hereof, is the Work of God alone. Hence he gives himſelf that Title, *I am the Lord that healeth thee*, Exod. 15. 26. And becauſe of the poyſonous Nature of Sin, and the danger it brings of

of Eternal Death unto the Souls of Men, the Removal of it, or a Recovery from it, is often called by the name of *Healing*, *Psal.* 6. 2. *Isai.* 57. 18, 19. *Hos.* 6. 1. Here it includeth two things; First, the pardon of Sin past, and then a supply of Grace to make us fruitful in Obedience. *I will be as the Dew to Israel*, as we shall see. This is God's Healing of Backslidings.

2. IN the Causes of it, which are, (1.) The Principal moving Cause, and that is free undeserved Love; *I will love them freely.* From hence alone is our Recovery to be expected. (2.) The Efficient Cause, which as unto Sins past is pardoning Mercy; *Mine Anger is turned away from him:* And as unto renewed Obedience, in which two our Recovery consists, it is in a plentiful Supply of Effectual Grace; *I will be as the Dew unto Israel.* Fresh supplies of the Spirit of Grace from above are so expressed: This is necessary unto our Healing and Recovery.

3. IT is described by it's Effect, which is a much more abundant Fruitfulness in Holiness and Obedience, in Peace and Love, than ever they had before attained. This the Prophet sets out in multiplied Similitudes and Metaphors, to denote the Greatness and Efficacy of the Grace so communicated.

I have a little insisted on the opening of this Context, for sundry Reasons.

1. THE

1. THE Caſe which I would conſider, is in all the parts of it ſtated diſtinctly, and repreſented clearly unto us. There is nothing remains, but only the eſpecial Way, whereby in the Exerciſe of Faith this Grace may be obtained, which is that which I ſhall ſpeak unto in the laſt place, as that which is principally intended in this Diſcourſe.

2. THAT I might ſhew how great a thing it is to have our Spiritual Decays made up, our Backſlidings healed, and ſo to attain the vigorous acting of Grace and Spiritual Life, with a flouriſhing Profeſſion, and fruitful Obedience in Old Age: It is ſo ſet forth here by the Holy Ghoſt, as that every one muſt needs have a ſenſe of the Beauty and Glory of the Work: It is that which Divine Love, Mercy and Grace are eminently effectual in unto the Glory of God, that which ſo many Duties are required to prepare us for. Let no Man think that it is a light or common work, every thing in it is peculiar: It is unto them who are made partakers of it, a Life from the Dead.

3. THAT none may utterly deſpond under their Decays. When Perſons are awakened by new Convictions, and begin to feel the weight of them, and how inextricately they are intangled with them, they are ready to faint, and even to deſpair of Deliverance. But we ſee that here is a Promiſe of Deliverance from them by

by pardoning Mercy, and alſo of ſuch freſh Springs of Grace as ſhall cauſe us to abound in Holineſs and Fruitfulneſs. Who is it that is entangled with Corruptions and Temptations, that groans under a ſenſe of a cold lifeleſs barren frame of Heart? he may take in Spiritual Refreſhment, if by Faith he can make Application of this Promiſe unto himſelf.

4. THAT which remains, is to declare the particular Way whereby in the Exerciſe of Faith, we may obtain the Fruit of this and all other Promiſes of the like Nature, unto the End ſo often propoſed; namely, of being flouriſhing and fruitful even in Old Age. Now ſuppoſing a due Attendance unto the Duties mentioned, I ſhall give ſome Directions, with reſpect unto that which gives Life, Power and Efficacy unto them all, and which will infallibly bring us unto the full Enjoyment of this Signal Mercy: And they are theſe that follow.

1. ALL our Supplies of Grace are from Jeſus Chriſt. Grace is declared in the Promiſes of the Old Teſtament, but the way of it's Communication, and our receiving of it, is revealed unto us in the New. This belongs to the Myſtery of it, that all Grace is from Chriſt, and ſhall be in vain expected any other way. He hath aſſured us, that *without him we can do nothing*; we can no more bring forth Fruit, than a Branch can that is ſeparated from the Vine, *John* 15. 3, 4, 5. He is our Head, and all our Spi-

Spiritual Influences, that is, Divine Communication of Grace; are from him alone. He is our Life efficiently, and liveth in us effectively, so as that our Ability for vital Acts is from him, *Gal.* 2. 20. *Col.* 3. 1, 2. Are we then any of us under Convictions of Spiritual Decays? or do we long for such Renovations of Spiritual strength, as may make us flourish in Faith, Love and Holiness, we must know assuredly, that nothing of all this can be attained, but it must come from Jesus Christ alone. We see what Promises are made, what Duties are prescribed unto us; but however, we should endeavour to apply our selves unto the one on the other, they would yield us no Relief, unless we know how to receive it from Christ himself.

2. THE only way of receiving Supplies of Spiritual Strength and Grace, from Jesus Christ, on our part, is by Faith. Hereby we come unto him, are implanted in him, abide with him, so as to bring forth Fruit. He dwells in our Hearts by Faith, and he acts in us by Faith, and we live by Faith in or on the Son of God. This I suppose will be granted, that if we receive any thing from Christ, it must be by Faith, it must be in the Exercise of it, or in a way of Believing; nor is there any one word in the Scripture that gives the least Encouragement to expect either Grace or Mercy from him in any other way, or by any other means.

3. THIS Faith respects the Person of Christ, his Grace, his whole Mediation, with all the Effects of it, and his Glory in them all. This is that which hath been so much insisted on in the foregoing Discourses, as that it ought not to be again insisted on: This therefore is the issue of the whole. A steady view of the Glory of Christ, in his Person, Grace, and Office, thrô Faith, or a constant lively Exercise of Faith on him, according as he is revealed unto us in the Scripture, is the only effectual way to obtain a Revival from under our Spiritual Decays, and such Supplies of Grace as shall make us Flourishing and Fruitful even in Old Age. He that thus lives by Faith in him, shall by his Spiritual thriving and growth, shew, *That the Lord is upright, that he is our Rock, and that there is no unrighteousness in him.*

WE may consider briefly: First, How this is is testified unto in the Scripture, and then what are the ways whereby this Grace, or Duty will produce this effect, and so put a close unto this part of the Application of the Sacred Truth before declared.

1. THIS Direction is given us, *Psal.* 34. 5. *They looked unto him and were lightened, and their Faces were not ashamed.* That it is Christ, or the Glory of God in him, that is thus looked unto, I need not prove, it will not be denied. And it is their Faith which is expressed by their look-

looking unto him; which is nothing but that beholding of his Glory which we have described: For it is an Act of Truſt ariſing from an Apprehenſion of *who* and *what* he is. The iſſue or effect hereof is, that they were lightened; that is, received freſh Communication of Spiritual, Saving, Refreſhing Light from him, and conſequently of all other Graces, whence their Faces were not aſhamed; nor ſhall we fail in our Expectation of new Spiritual Communication in the Exerciſe of the ſame Faith.

THIS is that which we are called unto, *Iſa.* 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be ſaved, all ye ends of the Earth.* On this look to Chriſt, on this view of his Glory depends our whole Salvation; and therefore all things that are needful thereunto, do ſo alſo: This is the way whereby we receive Grace and Glory. This is the Direction given us by the Holy Ghoſt for the attaining of them.

SO is the ſame Duty deſcribed, *Micah* 7. 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my Salvation; my God will hear me.* The Church knew not any other way of Relief, whatever her Diſtreſſes were.

A Look unto Chriſt as Crucified, (and how Glorious he was therein, hath been declared,) is made the Cauſe and Fountain of that Godly Sorrow, which is a Spring unto all other Graces, eſpecially in thoſe who have fallen under

Decays; *Zech.* 12. 10. and it is ſo alſo of deſiring ſtrength from him, to enable us to endure all our Tryals, Troubles, and Afflictions, with patience unto the end, *Heb.* 12. 2.

THE only Enquiry remaining, is, How a conſtant view of the Glory of Chriſt, will produce this Bleſſed Effect in us: And it will do ſo ſeveral ways.

1. IT will be effected by that transforming Power and Efficacy, which this Exerciſe of Faith is always accompanied withal. This is that which changeth us every day more and more into the likeneſs of Chriſt, as hath been at large before declared. Herein all Revivals and all Flouriſhings are contained. To have a good meaſure of Conformity unto Chriſt, is all whereof in this Life we are capable: The perfection of it is Eternal Bleſſedneſs. According as are our Attainments therein, ſo is the thriving and flouriſhing of the Life of Grace in us, which is that which is aimed at; other ways and means it may be have failed us, let us put this to the Tryal. Let us live in the conſtant Contemplation of the Glory of Chriſt, and vertue will proceed from him to repair all our Decays, to renew a right Spirit within us, and to cauſe us to abound in all Duties of Obedience. This way of producing theſe effects, Fleſh and Blood will not reveal; it looks like waſhing in *Jordan* to cure a Leproſie: But the Life of Faith is a Myſtery known only unto them in whom it is.

2. IT

2. IT will fix the Soul unto that Object which is ſuited to give it Delight, Complacency, and Satisfaction. This in perfection is Bleſſedneſs, for it is cauſed by the Eternal Viſion of the Glory of God in Chriſt: And the nearer Approaches we make unto this State, the better, the more Spiritual, the more Heavenly is the State of our Souls. And this is to be obtained only by a conſtant Contemplation of the Glory of Chriſt, as hath been declared. And it is ſeveral ways effectual unto the end now propoſed. For,

1. THE moſt of our Spiritual Decays and Barrenneſs ariſe from an inordinate admiſſion of other things into our Minds; for theſe are they that weaken Grace in all it's Operations. But when the Mind is filled with thoughts of Chriſt and his Glory, when the Soul thereon cleaves unto him with intenſe Affections, they will caſt out, or not give admittance unto thoſe cauſes of Spiritual Weakneſs and Indiſpoſition: See *Col.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Epheſ.* 5. 8.

2. WHERE we are ingaged in this Duty, it will ſtir up every Grace unto it's due Exerciſe, which is that wherein the Spiritual Revival enquired after, doth conſiſt. This is all we deſire, all we long for, this will make us fat and flouriſhing, namely, that every Grace of the Spirit have it's due Exerciſe in us. See *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5. 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 7, 8. Whereas there-

fore, Christ himself is the first proper adequate Object of all Grace, and all it's Exercise, (for it first respects him, and then other things for him) when the Mind is fixed on him, and his Glory, every Grace will be in a Readiness for it's due Exercise. And without this we shall never attain it by any Resolutions or Endeavours of our own, let us make the Tryal when we please.

3. THIS will assuredly put us on a vigilant watch, and constant conflict against all the deceitful workings of Sin, against all the Entrances of Temptation, against all the ways and means of Surprizals into foolish frames, by vain Imaginations, which are the causes of our Decays. Our Recovery or Revival will not be effected, nor a fresh Spring of Grace be obtained, in a careless, slothful Course of Profession. Constant watching, fighting, contending against Sin, with our utmost endeavour for an absolute Conquest over it, are required hereunto. And nothing will so much excite and encourage our Souls hereunto, as a constant view of Christ and his Glory; every thing in him hath a constraining Power hereunto, as is known to all who have any Acquaintance with these things.

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